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# **Do You Worship the Roman Catholic Jesus or the True Jesus of the Bible?**

**by Jeremy James**



Sincere members of the Roman Catholic faith are invited to accept the challenge set out in this paper.

As a born-again Christian I have long been concerned that the majority of Roman Catholics have no relationship whatever with the living God. They profess to know Christ but are unable to communicate with him in their daily lives. In reality they know *about* Christ, but they don't personally know him in any real sense.

The reason is very simple – the Christ taught by the Roman Catholic church is a false Christ. He does not exist except in the minds of the theologians who dreamt him up.

There is no connection whatever between the phony version taught by Rome and the living Christ who redeemed mankind and who lives today at the right hand of the Father.

As a former Roman Catholic I was taught to worship the false Christ and am very familiar with the extensive propaganda that Rome has used down the centuries to convince the masses that her counterfeit version is the real Jesus of Nazareth. From experience I know that a great many Roman Catholics are truly sincere in their beliefs and that any suggestion that Rome is teaching a false Christ makes many of them very uncomfortable – which is understandable.

Please bear with me as I put this in perspective. Firstly, let's assume that Satan is very active in the world today. All sincere Catholics should know that this is definitely the case and that he is bent on appropriating the work of Christ and taking His place in the minds and hearts of men.

Now consider how he operates. Direct frontal attack is certainly one of his methods, but his most enduring results are achieved through deception. As Jesus said, he is the father of lies. In his age-long quest to destroy true Christianity, he has striven again and again to present his 'truth' in a form that men will find acceptable. Given that he possesses one of the most remarkable intellects in the whole of creation, he knows how to manufacture and present convincing duplicates of truth. Perhaps his most successful counterfeit to date has been the false Christ taught by Rome.

I hope you have the courage to consider the following aspects of the true and the false Christ, respectively, and having done so to ask whether you have been deceived:

**- Sovereignty -**

False Christ: He delegated his function here on earth to an unbroken succession of religious figures who are charged with guiding his church and expressing his holy will.

**True Christ**: He continues to lead his church as the High Priest appointed by his Father for this purpose. He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in the heart of each and every believer Who in turn guides and directs them along the spiritual path. Every believer is a saint and a priest.

**- Salvation -**

False Christ: By his death on the cross, he opened the door of salvation to all who believe in him and earn his approval through good works and selfless service.

**True Christ**: Salvation is found exclusively in his saving work on the cross and there is absolutely nothing any person can do to earn this gift. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in the shed blood of Christ.

**- Scripture -**

False Christ: The teachings given through the apostolic tradition, when expressed by the Pope in doctrinal form, have the same force as scripture, as through Christ himself had spoken them.

**True Christ**: Every word deemed necessary by Christ for the guidance and edification of the believer is set out in scripture, the sixty-six books of the Bible. Not one word may be added or removed.

**- Grace -**

False Christ: The grace of God can be earned through unselfish acts of service and in particular through participation in sacramental rites approved by the church.

**True Christ**: Grace is a gift, the unmerited favour of God, and there is nothing that any man can do to earn it.

**- Mediator -**

False Christ: He allows others, notably the Queen of Heaven and canonised saints, to hear the requests and supplications of believers and to intercede with him on their behalf.

**True Christ**: In his High Priestly role, Christ alone hears the prayers of believers and intercedes with the Father on their behalf.

**- Sin -**

False Christ: He has delegated authority to anointed church leaders to forgive sin.

**True Christ**: He alone forgives sin, in accordance with his holy will.

This list is far from complete but it hits upon some startling differences between the true incarnate Son of God and the counterfeit entity manufactured by the church of Rome. Most Catholics are unaware of these differences since they have never studied the Bible. They trust their so-called religious superiors to interpret the Bible for them and to define their relationship with God. In doing so millions of sincere Catholics have sold their souls to a system of idolatry which is severely displeasing to God.

How can you have a relationship with Christ if you reject him in favour of a theological mirage, a cunning counterfeit concocted by the minds of sinful men? It is simply impossible.

Every day millions of Catholics kneel down and worship the False Christ. In a sense they are worshipping the Pope since they have placed him between themselves and the incarnate Son of God. It is idolatry and nothing but idolatry, a sin which the LORD abhors.

Why do so many Catholics prefer a counterfeit 'Christ' to the living Christ? The answer of course lies in our fallen nature.

Jesus himself referred to this inborn perversity when he said:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21-23)

He is clearly stating that there will be **many** who, on the day of judgment, will claim to be Christian and will even offer evidence of their allegiance to Christ but who will be rejected by him. What a devastating rebuke, to be told by Jesus that he **never** knew them! His solemn rejection implies that the 'Jesus' they were following while on earth was a false one.

Are you doing the will of the Father, as Jesus instructed, or are you doing the will of Rome? You can't do both.

Please understand that I write this from hard experience and not in condemnation of anyone. Having been a Catholic until age nineteen and a member of the New Age for a further 33 years, I can hardly claim to have a talent for discernment. But my background has helped me see just how dreadfully deceived most Catholics really are and how successful Satan has been in substituting a false Christ for the real one.

The Book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, is hardly ever taught by the Roman Catholic Church since it contains an astonishing amount of information about her true nature. The Book speaks about the Whore of Babylon, a city built on seven hills which has persecuted and murdered the true followers of Christ throughout history. Today the gruesome annals of Papal Rome are being quietly pushed aside and the millions of Christian martyrs forgotten. There is no mention of the abduction and torture of countless good people – tens of millions down the centuries – who would not bow to the will of Rome, the slaughter of entire towns and villages across central Europe, the terror of the Inquisition, or the extermination of any group which dared to live solely in accordance with God's word. Today she presents a tolerant, welcoming face, but she has not changed in any way. In accordance with her much vaunted maxim, ***Semper Idem***, she is always the same. The same doctrines, the same rituals, the same system of social control, and the same global ambitions.

She **must** teach a false Christ since otherwise she could not exist.

If you have any doubt about this and need hard evidence of the truly sinister and utterly unchristian spirit which secretly controls the Roman Catholic Church, then I suggest you read what is known as the Extreme Oath of the Jesuits – see Appendix [below](#). (A copy may also be found on the website of the [European Institute of Protestant Studies](#).)

In conclusion, dear reader, if you are a Roman Catholic and feel separated in any way from Christ, then please give thought to the ideas expressed in this paper.

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**16 June 2011**

**For further information visit [www.zephaniah.eu](http://www.zephaniah.eu)**

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## APPENDIX

### **Jesuit Extreme Oath of Induction** as recorded in the Journals of the 62nd Congress, 3rd Session, of the United States Congressional Record House Calendar No. 397, Report No. 1523, 15 February, 1913, pp. 3215-3216

The following is the text of the Jesuit Extreme Oath of Induction as recorded in the Journals of the 62nd Congress, 3rd Session, of the United States Congressional Record (House Calendar No. 397, Report No. 1523, 15 February, 1913, pp. 3215-3216), from which it was subsequently torn out. According to Professor Arthur Noble, the Oath is also quoted by Charles Didier in his book *Subterranean Rome* (New York, 1843), which was translated from the French original. Dr. Alberto Rivera, who left the Jesuit Order in 1967, confirmed that the induction ceremony and the text of the Jesuit Oath which he took were identical with those given below.

Note that certain portions of the text below have been highlighted for emphasis.

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When a Jesuit of the minor rank is to be elevated to command, he is conducted into the Chapel of the Convent of the Order, where there are only three others present, the principal or Superior standing in front of the altar. On either side stands a monk, one of whom holds a banner of yellow and white, which are the Papal colours, and the other a black banner with a dagger and red cross above a skull and crossbones, with the word INRI, and below them the words IUSTUM NECAR REGES IMPIUS, the meaning of which is: **It is just to exterminate or annihilate impious or heretical Kings, Governments, or Rulers.**

Upon the floor is a red cross at which the postulant or candidate kneels. The Superior hands him a small black crucifix, which he takes in his left hand and presses to his heart, and the Superior at the same time presents to him a **dagger**, which he grasps by the blade and holds the point against his heart, the Superior still holding it by the hilt, and thus addresses the postulant:

(The Superior speaks:)

My son, heretofore you have been taught to act the **dissembler**: among Roman Catholics to be a Roman Catholic, and to be a **spy** even among your own brethren; to believe no man, to trust no man. Among the Reformers, to be a Reformer; among the Huguenots, to be a Huguenot; among the Calvinists, to be a Calvinist; among other Protestants, generally **to be a Protestant; and obtaining their confidence, to seek even to preach from their pulpits**, and to denounce with all the vehemence in your nature our Holy Religion and the Pope; and even to descend so low as to become a Jew among Jews, that you might be enabled to gather together all information for the benefit of your Order as a faithful soldier of the Pope. You have been taught **to plant insidiously the seeds of jealousy and hatred between communities, provinces, states that were at peace, and to incite them to deeds of blood, involving them in war** with each other, and to create revolutions and civil wars in countries that were independent and prosperous, cultivating the arts and the sciences and enjoying the blessings of peace; **to take sides with the combatants and to act secretly with your brother Jesuit, who might be engaged on the other side**, but openly opposed to that with which you might be connected, only that the Church might be the gainer in the end, in the conditions fixed in the treaties for peace and that **the end justifies the means**. You have been taught your duty as a spy, to gather all statistics, facts and information in your power from every source; **to ingratiate yourself into the confidence of the family circle of Protestants and heretics of every class and character**, as well as that of the merchant, the banker, the lawyer, among the schools and universities, in parliaments and legislatures, and the judiciaries and councils of state, and to be all things to all men, for the Pope's sake, whose servants we are unto death. You have received all your instructions heretofore as a novice, a neophyte, and have served as co-adjurer, confessor and priest, but **you have not yet been invested with all that is necessary to command in the Army of Loyola in the service of the Pope**. You must serve the proper time as the instrument and **executioner** as directed by your superiors; for none can command here who has not **consecrated his labours with the blood of the heretic**; for "without the shedding of blood no man can be saved". Therefore, to fit yourself for your work and make your own salvation sure, you will, in addition to your former oath of obedience to your order and allegiance to the Pope, repeat after me:



(Text of the Oath:)

I \_\_\_\_\_, now in the presence of Almighty God, the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the saints, sacred host of Heaven, and to you, **my Ghostly Father, the superior general of the Society of Jesus**, founded by St. Ignatius Loyola, in the pontification of Paul the Third, and continued to the present, do by the womb of the Virgin, the matrix of God, and the rod of Jesus Christ, declare and swear that His Holiness, the Pope, is Christ's Vice-Regent and is the true and only head of the Catholic or Universal Church throughout the earth; and that by the virtue of the keys of binding and loosing given to His Holiness by my Saviour, Jesus Christ, **he hath power to depose heretical Kings, Princes, States, Commonwealths, and Governments, and they may be safely destroyed.** Therefore to the utmost of my power I will defend this doctrine and His Holiness's right and custom against all usurpers of the heretical or Protestant authority whatever, especially the Lutheran Church of Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and the now pretended authority and Churches of England and Scotland, and the branches of same now established in Ireland and on the continent of America and elsewhere and all adherents in regard that they may be usurped and heretical, opposing **the sacred Mother Church of Rome.** I do now denounce and disown any allegiance as due to any heretical king, prince or State, named Protestant or Liberal, or obedience to any of their laws, magistrates or officers. I do further declare the doctrine of the Churches of England and Scotland of the Calvinists, Huguenots, and others of the name of Protestants or Masons to be damnable, and **they themselves to be damned who will not forsake the same.** I do further declare that I will help, assist, and advise all or any of His Holiness's agents, in any place where I should be, in Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Ireland or America, or in any other kingdom or territory I shall come to, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant or Masonic doctrines and to destroy all their pretended powers, legal or otherwise. I do further promise and declare that, notwithstanding, I am dispensed with to assume any religion heretical for the propagation of the Mother Church's interest; **to keep secret and private all her agents' counsels** from time to time, as they entrust me, and not to divulge, directly or indirectly, by word, writing or circumstances whatever; but to execute all that should be proposed, given in charge, or discovered unto me by you, my Ghostly Father, or any of this sacred order. **I do further promise and declare that I will have no opinion or will of my own or any mental reservation whatever, even as a corpse or cadaver (perinde ac cadaver), but will unhesitatingly obey each and every command that I may receive from my superiors in the militia of the Pope** and of Jesus Christ. That I will go to any part of the world whithersoever I may be sent, to the frozen regions north, jungles of India, to the centres of civilisation of Europe, or to the wild haunts of the barbarous savages of America without murmuring or repining, and will be submissive in all things, whatsoever is communicated to me.

**I do further promise and declare that I will, when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly and openly, against all heretics, Protestants and Masons, as I am directed to do, to extirpate them from the face of the whole earth; and that I will spare neither age, sex nor condition, and that will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle, and bury alive these infamous heretics; rip up the stomachs and wombs of their women, and crush their infants' heads against the walls in order to annihilate their execrable race.** That when the same cannot be done openly I will secretly use the **poisonous cup**, the **strangulation cord**, the steel of the poniard, or the leaden bullet, regardless of the honour, rank, dignity or authority of the persons, whatever may be their condition in life, either public or private, as I at any time may be directed so to do by any agents of the Pope or Superior of the Brotherhood of the Holy Father of the Society of Jesus. In confirmation of which I hereby dedicate my life, soul, and all corporal powers, and **with the dagger which I now receive I will subscribe my name written in my blood in testimony thereof;** and should I prove false, or weaken in my determination, may my brethren and fellow soldiers of the militia of the Pope cut off my hands and feet and my throat from ear to ear, my belly be opened and sulphur burned therein with all the punishment that can be inflicted upon me on earth, and my soul shall be tortured by demons in eternal hell forever. That I will in voting always vote for a Knight of Columbus in preference to a Protestant, especially a Mason, and that I will leave my party so to do; that if two Catholics are on the ticket I will satisfy myself which is the better supporter of Mother Church and vote accordingly. That I will not deal with or employ a Protestant if in my power to deal with or employ a Catholic. **That I will place Catholic girls in Protestant families that a weekly report may be made of the inner movements of the heretics.** That I will provide myself with arms and ammunition that I may be in readiness when the word is passed, or I am commanded to defend the Church either as an individual or with the militia of the Pope. All of which I, \_\_\_\_\_, do swear by the blessed Trinity and blessed sacrament which I am now to receive to perform and on part to keep this my oath. In testimony hereof, I take this most holy and blessed sacrament of the Eucharist and witness the same further with my name written with the point of this dagger dipped in my own blood and seal in the face of this holy sacrament.

(He receives the wafer from the Superior and writes his name with the point of his dagger dipped in his own blood taken from over his heart.)

(Superior speaks:)

You will now rise to your feet and I will instruct you in the Catechism necessary to make yourself known to any member of the Society of Jesus belonging to this rank. In the first place, you, as a Brother Jesuit, will with another mutually make the ordinary sign of the cross as any ordinary Roman Catholic would; then one crosses his wrists, the palms of his hands open, and the other in answer crosses his feet, one above the other; the first points with forefinger of the right hand to the centre of the palm of the left, the other with the forefinger of the left hand points to the centre of the palm of the right; the first then with his right hand makes a circle around his head, touching it; the other then with the forefinger of his left hand touches the left side of his body just below his heart; the first then with his right hand draws it across the throat of the other, and the latter then with a dagger down the stomach and abdomen of the first. The first then says Iustum; and the other answers Necar; the first Reges; the other answers Impious. The first will then present a small piece of paper folded in a peculiar manner, four times, which the other will cut longitudinally and on opening the name Jesu will be found written upon the head and arms of a cross three times. You will then give and receive with him the following questions and answers:

From whither do you come? Answer: The Holy faith.

Whom do you serve? Answer: The Holy Father at Rome, the Pope, and the Roman Catholic Church Universal throughout the world.

Who commands you? Answer: The Successor of St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus or the Soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Who received you? Answer: **A venerable man in white hair.**

How? Answer: With a naked dagger, I kneeling upon the cross beneath the banners of the Pope and of our sacred order.

Did you take an oath? Answer: **I did, to destroy heretics and their governments and rulers, and to spare neither age, nor sex, nor condition; to be as a corpse without any opinion or will of my own, but to implicitly obey my Superiors in all things without hesitation or murmuring.**

Will you do that? Answer: I will.

How do you travel? Answer: In the bark of Peter the fisherman.

Whither do you travel? Answer: To the four quarters of the globe.

For what purpose? Answer: To obey the orders of my General and Superiors and execute the will of the Pope and faithfully fulfil the conditions of my oaths.

Go ye, then, into all the world and take possession of all lands in the name of the Pope. He who will not accept him as the Vicar of Jesus and his Vice-Regent on earth, **let him be accursed and exterminated.**

# **One of Satan's Greatest Lies: How *Replacement Theology* has Rejected and Perverted the LORD's Prophetic Purpose for Israel**

**by Jeremy James**



***...thou bearest not the root,  
but the root thee.***

Romans 11:18

Christ described Satan as both a liar and a murderer from the start. This would suggest that he is supremely skilful at exercising both of these diabolical functions. The Puritans were keenly aware of his powers of deception and their writings are full of warnings in this regard. But preachers in our modern era have, in the main, neglected or seriously underestimated his ongoing involvement in human affairs.

Today large segments of the church are in a truly wretched condition, largely because so many Christians are unable to see through the countless layers of deception that Satan is using to confuse and beguile his victims.

When I was saved I was struck by the remarkable series of promises that the LORD had made to the children of Israel, as recorded in his Holy Word. However, when discussing these doctrinal issues for the first time with born-again Christians, I was stunned to find that many of them did not believe that these promises still applied to Israel. Instead, they said, the promises had been removed en bloc from Israel and given to the church. And yet, when I pressed for a scriptural justification for this opinion, their replies made very little sense.

As a newly saved person, I had read the Bible as a literal text. I assumed that God had said in a fairly straightforward manner what he intended we should understand, and that His words were to be taken very much at face value. Though I did not realise it at the time, I was following Cooper's Golden Rule of Biblical Interpretation:

"When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise."

So what had my new Christian friends done that I had not done? They had adopted the view, perhaps without giving the matter much thought, that parts of the Bible were literal and parts were allegorical. In the former case, they took the Bible to mean what it plainly said but that, in the latter, they believed it meant something other than what it plainly said and that the literal meaning should be disregarded.

There were huge problems with this in my view. Firstly, how did they know which parts of the Bible were allegorical and which were not? And who decides what the 'real' meaning is? Secondly, I was struck by the fact that most of the parts which they had decided were allegorical were those which pertained to God's ongoing relationship with the children of Israel. Why would the LORD address the future of his chosen people in a vague and poetic manner when he had always addressed the other phases of their history in very literal and specific terms?

Moreover, it struck me as bizarre that so many sincere Christians could accept as literal only those Biblical prophecies which had already been fulfilled but would treat as allegorical those which had yet to be fulfilled.

Something was seriously wrong. Vast portions of Scripture were being pushed into an allegorical dead-end and denied any ongoing validity, except to the extent that they might possibly be applicable to the church. What is more, countless passages in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah and many other places could not be applied to the church without being subjected to obvious distortion, while others were rendered so vague and non-specific that they seemed to add nothing to the Word of God. This was especially evident in those passages where the LORD was using robust language and powerful images to convey what was clearly a very specific message.

## **The Five-word Proposition**

All of this confusion could be traced to just one proposition, namely that *the church has replaced Israel*. Incredibly, on the basis of this highly contentious proposition, millions of professing Christians were fully prepared to disregard or dismiss the plain meaning of God's Holy Word in countless passages of Scripture.

If it is without foundation, then this five-word proposition must surely qualify as one of Satan's greatest and most successful lies. Through it he has succeeded in

1. Separating the Jewish people forever from the unconditional promises that God had made to them.
2. Allegorising extensive passages of scripture – possibly ten percent or more of the Bible – and giving them a meaning that, in the majority of instances, is inconsistent or even in conflict with the rest of scripture.
3. Raising the possibility that God can make promises which he cannot keep.
4. Raising the possibility that God's sovereign will can be thwarted by something that man might or might not do.
5. Raising the possibility that other parts of scripture are also allegorical and thereby turning the Word of God into something that only theologians can interpret.
6. Completely destroying the prophetic relevance of the Book of Revelation.

When one considers that two of Satan's principal objectives are the annihilation of the Jewish people and the destruction of God's Holy Word, then the five-word lie is truly a demonic masterpiece. It even gets believers to question whether God will ultimately honour his promises to those who are saved. After all, if he can make numerous covenants with His chosen people, covenants of the most glorious kind, and then utterly cut them off without recourse, then the extent to which His promises can be taken literally is called seriously into question.

What could be more pleasing to Satan?

While I am not suggesting for one moment that someone who subscribes to Replacement Theology is in any sense lacking in integrity – since many wonderful Christians believe in this deception – I am definitely questioning the logic of their position and urging them to re-examine it very closely (and prayerfully). This paper is designed to motivate fellow believers in this regard and to provide them with a concise and objective account of the disturbing nature and corrosive implications of Replacement Theology.

## **The Birth of Replacement Theology**

To fully appreciate why so many well-regarded theologians have accepted the five-word proposition, we need to go all the way back to Apostolic times. Until one sees the extent to which, historically speaking, this broad interpretation has been shaped by racial jealousy and religious politics, the passion with which it has been defended can be difficult to understand. After all, why should the most radical and extensive reinterpretation of the plain word of scripture pertain almost exclusively to just one subject, namely the future status of Israel?

Tensions between Mosaic Judaism and the church existed from the beginning. The legalists of the Roman Catholic Church, which was then in formation, exploited and increased these tensions for their own purpose. Jews were traditionally exempt from persecution under the laws of ancient Rome, while Christians, by refusing to recognise the Emperor as a god or as god's representative on earth, were treated as a sect hostile to the state. Early Christians tried to describe themselves as a branch or off-shoot of Judaism in order to avail of the clemency provided under Roman law, but the jurists did not accept this argument. Ecclesiastic power-brokers were able to exploit this injustice or lack of parity under the law to widen the gap between Mosaic Jews and the Gentile church.

Relations between Christians and Jews were also damaged by the ill-advised Jewish attempt to throw off the Roman yoke during the so-called Bar Kochba revolt of 132-135 AD. A leading rabbi had foolishly declared that the leader of the revolt, one Simon Bar Kochba, was the long-awaited Messiah. While many Christians of Jewish origin would have been willing to support a revolt under Jewish leadership, they could not participate in a campaign led by a false Messiah. Given that the failure of this revolt led to the destruction of the Jewish nation and her dispersal to all corners of the Empire, the lack of active military support from Christians of Hebrew origin gave rise to considerable resentment among the Jews.



The fall of Jerusalem in the first Jewish revolt and the wholesale destruction of her Temple in 70 AD led many Christian theologians to conclude that, as God had abolished the system of Mosaic sacrifices, he had also terminated his covenant with those Jews – by far the majority – who had failed to accept the Gospel. So, even though the church consisted almost exclusively of ethnic Jews in the early decades of her existence, and the early church leaders were all of Jewish birth, a major shift in its organisation and leadership took place after 70 AD. Gentile leaders acquired far greater influence in the church and Gentile theologians began to reinterpret the Old Testament in an increasingly non-Jewish manner.



Since many of these theologians were schooled in Greek philosophy, and were greatly influenced by the pagan mindset which underpinned it, the shift away from the Judaic perspective accelerated. The Jews were gradually portrayed as unworthy recipients of God's favour in the preceding age. Given their role in the crucifixion of Christ, and their failure thereafter to convert to Christianity, they were perceived, not simply as lost sinners who had been deceived by Satan, but as craven participants in a great evil who were now consigned to a wretched existence while still on earth and to well-deserved damnation in eternity.

If God had rejected the Jews and revoked his covenant with them, then surely they should have been utterly destroyed and not simply scattered throughout the then known world? Why had God preserved them? Initially this question had bothered the bishops and theologians, but they concluded that God must have allowed the Jews to survive, and their disgrace to be manifest throughout the empire, as visible evidence of the severity of His judgment. In short, this is what happens to those who reject the Messiah.

This contemptuous and often hostile attitude increasingly found its way into the writings and sermons of the most influential bishops of the early church. Consider for example the following rants by one of the most esteemed theologians of his time, John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople (d.407):

“The Jews sacrifice their children to Satan...they are worse than wild beasts. The synagogue is a brothel, a den of scoundrels, the temple of demons devoted to idolatrous cults, a criminal assembly of Jews, a place of meeting for the assassins of Christ, a house of ill fame, a dwelling of iniquity, a gulf and abyss of perdition.”

“The Jews have fallen into a condition lower than the vilest animal. Debauchery and drunkenness have brought them to the level of the lusty goat and the pig. They know only one thing: to satisfy their stomachs, to get drunk, to kill, and beat each other up like stage villains and coachmen.”

“The synagogue is a curse, obstinate in her error, she refuses to see or hear, she has deliberately perverted her judgment; she has extinguished with herself the light of the Holy Spirit.”

Many similar denunciations by leading churchmen of the time are on record. Virtually all of the so-called ‘church fathers’ – who laid the theological foundations of the Roman Catholic church – expressed their contempt for the Jewish people. These included Justin Martyr, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, Hilary of Poitiers, Cyprian of Carthage, Ignatius of Antioch, and Origen of Alexandria.

## **The Political Motivation behind Replacement Theology**

The theology of the early church and the so-called ‘church fathers’ was shaped in part by political considerations. These included the creation of an ‘apostolic succession,’ whereby certain bishops could be deemed to possess the same authority as the original Apostles and were therefore entitled to exercise wide-ranging control over the church and its teachings. This power structure eventually evolved into the Papacy, where the bishop of Rome became the Pontifex Maximus, a pagan title previously held by the Roman emperors.

For this to work, all possible alternatives would have to be suppressed, in particular any potential challenge by the Jewish community. Since the Apostles and their principal disciples were all Jewish, their descendants could claim to have inherited or to possess some form of ecclesiastic authority. This could never be allowed. The Jews would have to be discredited, both individually and as a nation. And the best way to do this would be to claim that any spiritual status or election that the Jews had formerly possessed had now passed in its entirety to the church. In short, the church had replaced Israel. What is more, the replacement would be regarded, not simply as an accident of history, but as a divinely ordained event.

Since the Bible contained a wealth of prophetic verses pertaining to the ultimate salvation of the Jews as a nation and to God’s unconditional promises in this regard, not to mention their future triumphant return to the land of Israel, it became necessary to neutralise such scriptural passages and replace them in each instance with a plausible alternative meaning. To a large extent the five-word proposition, ‘the church has replaced Israel,’ gave a basis for doing this. But some of these passages were so literal and emphatic that a further device was needed. This became the allegorical method of Biblical interpretation. Even if its rules were unclear and its results unconvincing, the main aim was achieved. The literal meaning of God’s promises to Jacob and his descendants forever was drowned in a sea of poetic ambiguity.

The text of scripture could be interpreted only as the theologians directed. This led in due course to the official suppression of the Bible itself, where only members of the Roman clergy could possess a copy. Their exclusive control over God’s Word was reinforced by condemning the masses to a low level of literacy and forbidding the translation of the Bible into a local dialect. Latin was a foreign language to most people, so the Vulgate, the Rome-approved translation of the Bible, was unintelligible to all but senior monks and clerics.

## **The Power of Indoctrination**

The insidious nature of Replacement Theology is much easier to understand when one sees where it came from and why the ‘church’ – meaning the Roman Catholic church – routinely employed indoctrination and propaganda, along with a severe form of censorship, to maintain social control. When seen in this light, Replacement Theology is not a ‘theology’ at all but an expedient way of bolstering the power of Rome.

This long-running indoctrination was so effective that even exceptional religious reformers like Luther and Calvin were unable to see through it. Obviously they understood that much of what Rome taught was mischievous nonsense, but they didn't go far enough in their analysis. Both were members of the Roman Catholic intelligentsia before they rebelled, and as former priests, they were long schooled in the official view that Jews were vile degenerates incapable of redemption. Visceral contempt of this kind, instilled from childhood, is very hard to shake off, and neither Luther nor Calvin succeeded in questioning this aspect of their beliefs. As a result Replacement Theology was retained by both Calvinism (the Reformed or Presbyterian church) and the Anglican/Episcopalian church.

Today only a handful of Christian churches reject Replacement Theology. The rest teach it to their flock. Consequently tens of millions of well-meaning Christians around the world are being deceived by Satan's five-word lie. The implications of this for the church as a whole are very disturbing. Instead of supporting the will of God in a matter which they know – or ought to know – is VERY close to His heart, substantial numbers are actively resisting Him.

The foundation of Israel as an independent state and Jewish homeland in 1948 should have been a bone-shaking wake-up call for Christians everywhere, but few seemed to recognise its remarkable significance. Prophecy was being fulfilled right before their eyes, but the vast majority of Christians didn't really seem to care.

This rejection of the LORD's prophetic purpose for Israel also has serious implications for individual Christians. Our prayer life and our daily relationship with the LORD is intimately bound up with our understanding and acceptance of scripture, the express will of God. If there are passages in scripture that we have difficulty understanding, we are expected to take them to the LORD in prayer and seek the light of understanding. This ought to be obvious and yet millions of Christians today are perfectly willing to dismiss or disregard large parts of the Bible by viewing them exclusively through the lens of Replacement Theology.

Did it never occur to them that God may have meant exactly what he said and that the five-word lie was a vile deception?

It is even more startling when preachers and pastors teach this doctrine without ever bothering to examine it in detail for themselves. If they did, they would surely see how much harm they can do by blindly accepting a proposition which, if unfounded, can erase, diminish or corrupt large portions of God's Holy Word.

Having said that, let's now examine what the LORD really intended by his prophetic statements about Israel and why Replacement Theology cannot possibly be true.

## God's Covenants with Israel

There is a long established principle of Bible interpretation, accepted by scholars and expositors for generations, namely that the frequency with which a matter is mentioned in Scripture is a measure of its relative importance. This holds whether the repetition is in the same chapter, the same book, or another book. In God's eyes, the Bible is one book and He is its sole author. He underlines the importance he attaches to certain truths or principles by repeating them. We are meant to take this into consideration in our study of scripture and to appreciate its relevance.

On this basis, one would expect words like *faith*, *hope*, *charity*, *sin*, *sacrifice* and *salvation* to figure prominently, and they do. The following table lists the frequency with which they occur throughout the Bible [Authorised or King James Version]:

Word	Frequency
<i>faith</i>	247 times
<i>hope</i>	130
<i>charity / love</i>	339
<i>sin</i>	448
<i>sacrifice</i>	297
<i>salvation</i>	164
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1625</b>

Now compare the above table with the following one:

Word	Frequency
<i>Israel</i>	2576 times
<i>Jacob</i>	377
<i>David</i>	1139
<i>Jerusalem</i>	814
<i>Abraham</i>	250
<i>'My people'</i>	217
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5373</b>

Does this not tell us something? Using a basic principle of Biblical interpretation we can see that scripture is highlighting a people and a place that are of immense importance to the LORD God of all creation. References to *Israel* alone greatly exceed the sum of all references throughout the Bible to *faith*, *hope*, *charity*, *love*, *sin*, *sacrifice* and *salvation*.

The critics counter this with the same sweeping assertion, namely that the church has **replaced** Israel and has become 'My people' in the eyes of the LORD. But this can be achieved just as easily by **adding** the church to the list. There is no need whatever to replace Israel. (This is exactly how the Apostle Paul addresses the question in his epistle to the Romans – which we will discuss shortly.)

When the LORD refers to *Israel*, *Jacob*, *David* and *Jerusalem* in his Holy Word, He is doing so in the context of the covenant that He made with Abraham. This means that *Israel* can only mean *Israel*, *Jacob* can only mean *Jacob*, *David* can only mean *David*, and *Jerusalem* can only mean *Jerusalem*. Once they are removed from this context – namely the fulfilment in due course of the Abrahamic covenant – they lose their meaning.

A correct understanding of the Abrahamic covenant is therefore crucial to a correct understanding of the Bible as a whole. Unfortunately, in my experience only a small minority of Christians have actually studied the covenant, how it was solemnized, and the various occasions thereafter when it was confirmed.

Here is the key passage from scripture:

Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it." **And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"** So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." **Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.** And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. Now when the sun was going down, **a deep sleep fell upon Abram;** and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." **And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.**  
(Genesis 15:5-17)

The LORD asked Abram (who was not yet called Abraham) to take three animals and two birds, but He did not specify what he should do with them. However, in accordance with a well-established custom, Abraham knew what to do. The traditional way of sealing a covenant, particularly where a matter of great importance was concerned, was to sacrifice a number of domestic animals and prepare a large fire for their carcasses. The fire, with its sacrificial pieces, was in two parts, with a narrow path between them. The covenant was sealed when both parties walked between the burning sacrifice. A covenant confirmed in this way was irrevocable.

The LORD gave confirmation of the practice itself when, in the book of Jeremiah, he said:

And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, **when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it** – the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land **who passed between the parts of the calf** (Jeremiah 34:18-19 )

The procedure in Genesis departed from the traditional formula in one very significant respect – only *one* of the two parties walked through the fire. The Lord had put Abraham into a very deep sleep, thereby preventing his participation, and then proceeded to seal the covenant with Himself.

The *smoking oven* (fire pot) and *burning torch* in the final verse refer, respectively, to the coming tribulations of His chosen people and to His divine presence with them at all times.

In order that the church would understand the immutable and irrevocable nature of the covenant which the LORD had made with Abraham and his descendants forever, He gave the following clarification in Hebrews 6:13-20:

**For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself**, saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. **Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath**, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Could anything be clearer? “He swore by Himself.” The covenant is irrevocable and everlasting. It depends on nothing but God’s sovereign will. There is nothing man can do to annul or revoke this solemn commitment. And it must come to pass because, as the Apostle reminds us, it is “impossible for God to lie.”

Now let’s examine the specific promises that God made by covenant to Abraham.

## The Abrahamic Covenant

We’ll begin with its initial pronouncement:

Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:1-3)

The key fact that must be considered here is that the covenant was given without *any* conditions attached. None whatsoever. It is essential that one recognise this since the whole of Replacement Theology is predicated on the belief that one was somehow implied. It should also be noted that the LORD did not specify *when* the covenant would ultimately be fulfilled. However, since it was not fulfilled at the First Coming of Christ, the proponents of Replacement Theology have assumed that the covenant with the Jewish people has lapsed. They have inserted a termination date into the covenant even though none was specified.

We also know that the promise of the covenant, once it has been realized, will endure forever:

And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are – northward, southward, eastward, and westward; **for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever**. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” (Genesis 13:14-17)

Note that word, *forever*. Some believe that this could not possibly mean ‘for a time without end’ since the Jewish people were subsequently evicted from their land for rejecting their Messiah. They reason that there must have been a condition attaching to the covenant, namely, that the descendants of Abraham would ultimately have to accept the Messiah when he came. But this is a serious error. In the eyes of the LORD, his chosen people have never ceased to be the true inheritors of the land and the promises given by Him to Abraham. Their eviction from the Promised Land by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and then the Romans, which the LORD imposed on them on foot of their disobedience as a nation, was certainly a very severe judgment, but it neither contravened nor compromised the covenant in any way.

Indeed, Deuteronomy tells us that such a judgment *would* befall the Jewish people if they departed from God's holy law, but that their banishment would **not** be permanent:

Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, **that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.** (Deuteronomy 30:1-5)

Many of the prophets foretold a time when the children of Israel would be scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth but that the LORD would eventually bring them back again to the Promised Land. He would do this, not because of any intrinsic merit or righteousness on their part, but for *His* name's sake:

But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: **I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake**, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. **And I will sanctify My great name**, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:21-28)

It beggars belief that the advocates of Replacement Theology could try to allegorise a passage such as this and apply it to the church. The church has never been banished from the land that it possessed – for the LORD *never* granted a tract of land to the church. But the LORD **did** give a tract of land to the children of Israel, and he **did** scatter them to the far corners of the earth, and he **did** bring them back again to their own land. And at some future date he will cleanse them exactly as stated and live physically among them, exactly as stated.



The Book of Zechariah is an astonishing depiction of this latter event, the Second Coming of Christ.

Many who allegorise the word of God have a disturbing tendency to ignore passages that challenge their artificial method of interpretations. Take the following, for example:

Then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; **they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.** They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. (Ezekiel 37:21-24)

The church has never existed as two nations. Indeed, it makes no sense to conceive of the church as a nation, and the New Testament never suggests anything of the kind. So to which two nations is this passage referring? This ought to be obvious since their vicissitudes play such a prominent role in several books of the Old Testament. They are, of course, the northern kingdom of Samaria which was overrun by the Assyrians in 722 BC and the southern kingdom of Judea which was conquered by the Babylonians in 606 BC. They were one nation in the time of Solomon but were torn asunder after his death by internecine strife.

Now consider the remaining verses in that chapter:

Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince **forever**. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an **everlasting covenant** with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst **forevermore**. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst **forevermore**. (Ezekiel 37:25-28)

Could our Heavenly Father have made His intentions any more explicit? What possible construction could one place on words like *forever*, *everlasting* and *forevermore*, except what they plainly mean? It takes a truly rebellious attitude to even *want* to construe a passage such as this in an allegorical manner in order to meet the constraints imposed by a spurious five-word proposition.

When people play with the word of God they are playing with fire.



## The Davidic Covenant

As the advent of the Messiah drew closer, the LORD added a further covenant to those he had already made with Israel. This was conveyed to David through the prophet Nathan and is known as the Davidic Covenant. It enlarges upon the promises made in Genesis:

Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, **and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.** I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.**” According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David. (2 Samuel 7:10-17)

Here the LORD is telling David that he will establish his dynasty – his “house” – on an everlasting basis. If some of the kings in this lineage depart from His holy law, they will be punished “with the rod of men”, but the line itself will continue – “But my mercy shall not depart from him”. Note verse 16 in particular: “And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”

Following the principle of repetition in Biblical interpretation, we note in particular the words of Psalm 89:

I have found My servant David; with My holy oil I have anointed him, with whom My hand shall be established; also My arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not outwit him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague those who hate him. But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, and in My name his horn shall be exalted. Also I will set his hand over the sea, and his right hand over the rivers. He shall cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.’ Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. **My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, if they break My statutes And do not keep My commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.** Selah (Psalm 89:20-37)

What a truly glorious affirmation of His covenant! Its permanency is emphasized to the utmost. The LORD acknowledges that the children of Israel will likely depart from his law and his judgments and will break his statutes and his commandments – and will be punished accordingly. But then comes that magnificent word – **“Nevertheless...”**!

This is why I consider Replacement Theology at core to be, not just an aberrant method of Biblical interpretation, but a disturbing expression of the rebelliousness and perversity of man’s fallen nature. How can anyone, of any persuasion or any denomination, see fit to amend, dilute or pervert the extraordinary promise that the LORD made to David in the above passage when he said? –

**Nevertheless** My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.

## **The New Covenant**

In addition to the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, the LORD made a further covenant with Israel. It is described as the ‘New Covenant’ (*brit chadashah*) by Jeremiah and mentioned also by Isaiah and Ezekiel. The New Covenant does not supersede or replace the Abrahamic or Davidic covenants but adds to the promises that the LORD has already made.

Note that this covenant is *also* unconditional. The LORD emphasises this by comparing its theoretical dissolution to the departure of the sun, the moon and the stars from the course in which He has set them – in other words an absurdity:

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: **I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.** No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. **For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.** Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar; the LORD of hosts is His name: **If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.** Thus says the LORD: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 31:31-37)

The New Covenant is described in the following terms by Ezekiel and Isaiah, respectively:

Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: **I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name’s sake,** which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. **For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.** (Ezekiel 36:22-28)

The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob, says the LORD. As for Me, says the LORD, **this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants, says the LORD, from this time and forevermore.** (Isaiah 59:20-21)

The Word of God also refers to the New Covenant in Jeremiah 50:4-5, Ezekiel 34:25-30 and Ezekiel 37:21-28.

The Book of Hebrews confirms that the New Covenant will replace the Old, namely the Mosaic Covenant, since it alone is specified. But it will *not* replace the Abrahamic or Davidic Covenants:

Because finding fault with them, He says: Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – **not according to the covenant [i.e. the Mosaic Covenant] that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt;** because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the **covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. **For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.** (Hebrews 8:8-13)

These passages of scripture are truly remarkable. In bold and striking terms the LORD is stating that it is his unconditional intention to return the children of Israel to the Promised Land, to forgive them their iniquities, to cleanse them of all impurity, and to put his Spirit within them. Though they did not accept their Messiah at his First Coming, they will accept him at his Second Coming.

Note too the opening statement in Ezekiel, **"I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake."** This underlines the unconditionality of the covenant and gives the reason why the LORD is doing what he is doing – for His name's sake. Just as the LORD demonstrated his sovereign power to the heathen when he led the children of Israel out of Egypt, despite their disobedience and rebellious behaviour, so too will he vindicate his holy name at the end of the age by fulfilling ALL of his promises to the faithful remnant of Israel.

This will be the Kingdom – the *earthly* Kingdom – that the Old Testament referred to innumerable times, that John the Baptist had been expecting, that the Apostles had enquired about so often, and that Christ confirmed he would come and establish when the children of Israel finally proclaimed the words, **“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”!** (Matthew 23:39).

Isaiah was referring to this glorious day in the following passage, when Christ would reign in person as world ruler from his capital in Jerusalem:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2-3).

[For ease of reference a summary of the Covenants which the LORD made with Israel is set out in **Appendix A.**]



## Understanding the Church

Some advocates of Replacement Theology contend that the church existed in the Old Testament, albeit in a less complete form than it did after Pentecost. In this way they argue that the church was always the immediate recipient of the covenants that God had made with Israel, but that Israel herself had fallen away and forfeited those elements which had been specific to her, such as the possession in perpetuity of the Promised Land.

This is a clever formulation of Replacement Theology because it avoids the need to prove that the church inherited the promises that the nation of Israel had allegedly forfeited when she rejected the Messiah. Instead it subtly appropriates those same promises from the earliest times by pretending to be ‘enfolded’ in some sense in the concept of Israel. (Covenant Theology – *see below* – tries to give this a theological basis.)

However, this argument too is seriously flawed. The church came into being at Pentecost and was not present in the Old Testament. This is why the Apostle Paul referred to it as a “mystery,” something that had not previously been revealed. The church is the body of the resurrected Christ and each born-again Christian, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is a member of that body. This means that the church could never have existed in the Old Testament in any form. If it had then Paul would not have been able to call it a “mystery.” Christ gave confirmation of this when he said “...and upon this rock [namely Himself] I *will* build my church...” (Matthew 16:18). The future tense shows that the church had not been established at that point in time.

Paul referred to the “great mystery” as the marital relationship that now exists between Christ and the church:

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:30-32)

The Apostle used a large part of his letter to the Romans – chapters 9-11 – to explain how the church, the newly formed mystery, differed from Israel. In it he shows that a clear distinction must be drawn between the totality of those who have descended from Abraham through Jacob – which we would today regard as the global community of ethnic Jews – and the elect subset among them who were and are true believers in the LORD God of Israel.

He begins by asking the fundamental question, the question at the core of Replacement Theology, namely, “has God cast away His people?” The advocates of Replacement Theology answer this with a resounding *Yes!* But Paul says exactly the opposite:

I say then, has God cast away His people? **Certainly not!** For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life? But what does the divine response say to him? I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. **Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.** And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. (Romans 11:1-6)

There is nothing man can do, not even the Jews, to thwart the will of God. Scripture declares that the LORD has, through His unfathomable grace, reserved unto Himself a remnant of true believers among the ethnic descendants of Abraham through Jacob; that he views this remnant as Israel; and that he will fulfil through them every one of the promises that he made to Abraham and David.

It should be obvious that this remnant is **not** part of the church since otherwise little of what Paul is saying in chapters 9-11 of Romans would make any sense. Also, it must be remembered that this confirmation of the continuance of God's special covenant-relationship with the nation of Israel was made many years after she rejected the Messiah. Thus, the great Apostle to the Gentiles is reassuring his readers that the unconditional covenants that the LORD had made with their nation did not lapse at the Crucifixion.

[It also means that Jews who accept Christ are still covered by the Land Covenant, while Gentile Christians are not and never will be. This helps to highlight the distinctive way in which the LORD is dealing with these two groups of believers.]

In chapter 11 the Apostle describes the entire congregation of true believers, from the earliest days to the end of time, as an olive tree. Israel comprises the root and trunk of the tree, as well as the natural branches, while the church comprises a set of wild (or uncultivated) branches which have been grafted in. The root and trunk of the tree can accommodate all of ethnic Israel, but the majority of Jews rejected the opportunity to continue as a natural branch. The LORD had therefore cut them off temporarily and replaced them with Gentile believers, known collectively as the church.

Here is how Paul explained it:

For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, **being a wild olive tree**, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, **remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you**. You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into **their own olive tree**? For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that **blindness** in part has happened to Israel until **the fullness of the Gentiles has come in**. (Romans 11:16-25)

Both the natural branches and the engrafted branches are of equal standing in the eyes of the LORD, but His plans for each are not identical.



When the Apostle makes reference to “the fullness of the Gentiles” he is referring to the total number of Gentiles who will ultimately be grafted onto the olive tree. At the point when this number is reached, shortly before the Second Coming of Christ, the church will be physically withdrawn (‘snatched’) from the earth in an event known as the Rapture (*Harpazo* in the original Greek) and the “blindness” which currently afflicts the believing remnant of Israel will be removed. Then the world will witness the astonishing events described in the Book of Zechariah and the Book of Revelation.



### ***Israel* is never used as a synonym for the church**

There is not a single instance anywhere in the Bible where the word *Israel*, as a collective term, refers to anything other than the Jewish people as an ethnic group, whether to all descendants of Abraham through Jacob, to the tribes of the Northern Kingdom only, or to the faithful remnant only. The advocates of Replacement Theology contend that the church replaced Israel after Pentecost. However, even though the word ‘Israel’ occurs no fewer than 42 times in the New Testament in relation to events occurring after Pentecost, never once is the church being referred to, either in tandem with Israel or in place of Israel.

The New Testament consistently refers to the nation of Israel as ‘Israel’ or ‘Jacob’ even after the establishment of the church. In his analysis of Israel and its relationship with the LORD following the creation of the church, the Apostle Paul makes the following definitive statement:

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins. (Romans 11:25-27)

The ‘fullness of the Gentiles’ will mark the end of the age, at which point Christ shall return and take away all ‘ungodliness’ from Jacob (Israel) in accordance with his ‘covenant with them.’ What could be plainer? The mystery that Paul is referring to is the church, not Israel. The latter continues to exist and to retain its relationship under covenant with the LORD.

## **The Remnant of Israel**

In order to understand fully what the LORD means when he speaks of Israel, it is important to recognise that it comprises, not just direct blood descendants of Jacob, but anyone adopted into one of the twelve tribes or inducted through marriage. Thus Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, became one of the children of Israel through assimilation. As though to emphasize her sinful nature even further, we find that her name meant 'Egypt'. And yet she figured in the bloodline of Joseph, the husband of the earthly mother of Jesus. Another Gentile, the Moabitess Ruth, also figured in the same bloodline.

Hebrews 11:31 tells us that Rahab's faith had saved her (along with her parents and brothers). We also know that Ruth married a Jew and converted to Judaism. Thus in each case Gentiles became Jews through faith. And their 'Jewishness' was no less than that of other Jews in the eyes of the LORD. In Biblical Jewish adoption, the person who has been adopted is considered to have been born into the household and there is no requirement, in tables of genealogy, to distinguish between natural birth and incorporation by adoption

God also provided for the admission of Gentile servants "bought for money" into the "congregation of Israel" when he permitted them to eat the Passover. These had to be circumcised first, circumcision being the outward sign of election for all Jewish males:

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it. A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it. In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.  
(Exodus 12:43-47)

Paul referred to this method of adoption when he said that all members of the church were bought with a price – "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." (1 Corinthians 7:23 KJV) Through faith we became the servants of Christ who paid the price for our sins. In this way we are grafted onto the olive tree of God's elect. And we are not asked to undergo outward circumcision since the New Covenant requires circumcision of one's heart only (namely regeneration).

We can see therefore that even in the Old Testament there was clear, albeit limited, provision for the inclusion of believing Gentiles among God's elect.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul equates the salvation of a proportion only of the Gentiles through faith with the salvation of a proportion only of the Jews through faith:

As He says also in Hosea: I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, You are not My people, there they shall be called sons of the living God. Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved. (Romans 9:25-27)

In rejecting Replacement Theology, one must not make the mistake of ascribing a separate means of salvation to the remnant of Israel. Both Jew and Gentile are saved in exactly the same way, through faith in the blood of Christ. (Old Testament saints were saved through their faith in God's Word and His promises, which anticipated the future sacrificial atonement of Christ.)

The LORD has provided only one means of salvation for fallen man and that is through the substitutionary atonement of His only begotten Son. Contemporary Jews who have not yet come to Christ are as much in need of earnest evangelism as non-Christians of any persuasion.

### **The Return and Protection of the Remnant of Israel**

The LORD tells us many times in his Holy Word that he will gather the scattered children of Israel from the far corners of the world and bring them once again to the Promised Land. He says that it will be such a momentous event, such an astonishing demonstration of his power and sovereignty, that in the eyes of the world it will supersede the events described in Exodus:

It shall come to pass **in that day** that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to **recover the remnant** of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and **the islands of the sea**. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from **the four corners of the earth**. (Isaiah 11:11-12)

Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and **gather you** from the west; I will say to the north, 'Give them up,' and to the south, 'Do not keep them back.' **Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth – everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.** (Isaiah 43:5-7)

Therefore behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that it shall no more be said, 'The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel **from the land of Egypt**,' but, 'The LORD lives who **brought up** the children of Israel **from the land of the north and from all the lands** where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers. (Jeremiah 16:14-15)

For thus says the LORD: Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O LORD, save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’ **Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the ends of the earth,** among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and the one who labors with child, together; a great throng shall return there. (Jeremiah 31:7-8)

**I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;** they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. **I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them, says the LORD your God.** (Amos 9:14-15)

We know that these related passages are not referring to the return from the Babylonian captivity because (i) that return was only partial (the majority of Jews remained in Babylon and only three tribes – Judah, Benjamin and Levi – were affected), (ii) it was not marked by miraculous events remotely like those associated with the Exodus from Egypt, and (iii) it was concerned with the return of a Jewish remnant from only one geographical location.

Rather, these five related passages are referring to the End Time because (i) Isaiah uses the marker phrase “in that day” (which we will discuss in greater detail below), (ii) the regathering is from the far corners of the world (“islands of the sea,” “four corners of the earth,” “ends of the earth,” “all the lands”), (iii) it will comprehend all the tribes of Israel, and (iv) they will never again be removed from the Promised Land.

We should note also that Isaiah 43 includes a remarkable reference to the unique relationship, both tender and paternal, that has existed between the Living God and His chosen people since the time of Abraham:

Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth – everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him. (Isaiah 43:5-7)

The foundation of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948, was a monumental landmark in Bible prophecy. The children of Israel, who had been returning in ever increasing numbers to the Promised Land since the 1880s, were once again in control of part of the territory which the LORD had given them some 4000 years earlier, for an everlasting possession.

The return described in the five passages above is the great global migration of Jews to the Promised Land that will occur *after* Christ comes back to earth to rule His kingdom. The waves of migration which led to the foundation of Israel in 1948, as well as the return of many Jews thereafter, is not a fulfilment of these specific passages but of prophecies relating to the reestablishment of Israel as a secular state, notably the ‘dry bones’ prophecy of Ezekiel 37.

Moses foretold this great End Time return and the severity of God's judgment on His wayward people in Deuteronomy 28. We know from the Book of Revelation that the final and most severe segment of this judgment will come in the seven year Tribulation period. However, Moses also reminded the children of Israel that they would one day comprise one of the largest nations on earth:

The LORD your God has multiplied you, and here you are today, as the stars of heaven in multitude. May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you. (Deuteronomy 1:10-11)

When one considers that the children of Israel at that time comprised 600,000 men, plus their wives and little ones, the nation as a whole would have been at or very close to two million in population. Moses said the LORD had promised to make them many times greater than this, by a factor of a thousand. This means that the numbers of believing Jews on earth at some time in the future will be at least two billion, and possibly more.

The tendency of modern Christians to focus almost exclusively on the New Testament, as though it had replaced or superseded the Old Testament, is a tragedy of Biblical exegesis. The Bible is one book with one Author. Much of the New Testament cannot be understood without a proper understanding of the Old Testament. It is even misleading to say, as many do, that the Old is the New concealed and the New is the Old revealed, because this too suggests that the New Testament is somehow defining what the Old 'really' meant. This is a serious mistake. All parts of the Bible need to be considered when interpreting the meaning of any particular passage and deciding its contribution to the totality of God's Word. For example, Revelation, the last book of the Bible, can only be fully understood through a careful examination of several books of the Old Testament, including Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Exodus and Genesis.

One of the most serious examples of this kind of error may be found in the Gospel of Luke:

Then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. (Luke 1:30-33)

Most Christians are content to interpret this passage as a straightforward confirmation that the child which the woman will bear is the long-awaited Messiah. But they hardly notice that it is *also* a confirmation of the four unconditional promises in the Davidic Covenant. These four promises are as follows:

	Promise	Passage in Luke, Chapter 1
1.	An eternal dynasty will be established in the Promised Land, in the line of David.	“the throne <u>of His father David</u> ”
2.	An eternal kingdom will be established in the Promised Land, governed by the eternal dynasty.	“and of <u>His kingdom</u> there will be <u>no end</u> ”
3.	An eternal throne will be established in Jerusalem, the dynastic seat of government in the eternal kingdom.	“ <u>the Lord God will give Him the throne</u> of His father David.”
4.	An eternal person, fully man and fully God, will rule the world from the eternal throne in Jerusalem.	“the <u>Son of the Highest</u> ...And He will reign over the <u>house of Jacob</u> forever”

Not only were they unfulfilled at the conception of the infant Jesus but they remain unfulfilled to this day!

This is why it is essential that Christians continue to study earnestly the literal truth of the Word of God and not be tempted to allegorise passages that they do not fully understand.

Not only will the LORD fulfil every one of His promises to Abraham and David, as well as the New Covenant promise in Jeremiah, but He will do so exactly in the terms which the Jews of Old Testament times would have understood, namely, that the Messiah will return and rule here on earth in human form as king of the nation of Israel, that his throne, the throne of David, will be in Jerusalem, that every knee will bow before him, and that his kingdom will have no end. To allegorise any of this is to contend that the LORD was not speaking to His people about matters of the utmost importance in terms they could understand.

Most professing Christians today have allegorised so many parts of the Bible, and have adopted interpretations of the New Testament which so distort or misconstrue the plain meaning of the Old Testament, that the Second Coming – to the extent that they believe in it at all – is seen as a quasi-mystical event which brings the whole of history to a heart-warming conclusion. They reject the Resurrection of the church-age saints who died in Christ, the Rapture of the living saints, the huge global catastrophe known as the Tribulation, the massive attack on the nation of Israel by the forces of the Antichrist, the supernatural preservation of the believing remnant of Israel for three and a half years, the actual physical return of Christ to defeat Satan, the False Prophet and the Antichrist, and the Millennial reign of Christ from the holy city of Jerusalem.

Christians should be sufficiently humble and God-fearing to acknowledge that God will keep his word, that He will honour every one of his promises to the children of Israel, and that he will do exactly what he said he will do – to the last detail. “I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it” – Ezekiel 24:14.

## **Jerusalem, the Holy City**

Jerusalem and its eventual elevation to the principal city on earth is one such ‘detail’.

This special city matters to the LORD because He has chosen Zion for His holy habitation. This ought to be a truth of profound significance to Christians everywhere, but sadly this is not the case. Through the subversive influence of Replacement Theology they have neglected to consider the many occasions throughout scripture where the LORD has accorded an extraordinary spiritual status to this ancient city. Again and again his Holy Word makes it perfectly clear that He intends to raise Jerusalem to an exalted status in the Millennium Age, the thousand-year reign of Christ.

God Himself chose the location for the city:

Thus says the Lord GOD: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. (Ezekiel 5:5)

It is the city where God chose to put His name:

...Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. (1 Kings 14:21)

And it is the city wherein God has stated He would dwell forever:

For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place:  
This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.  
(Psalm 132:13-14)

This is why Satan covets Jerusalem and will do all he can to occupy and control her. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East can only be understood when one realises that Satan is doing everything in his power to wrench Jerusalem from the Jews.

Jerusalem is the only city in the world where the LORD has at any time placed his Shekinah Glory, the visible manifestation of His Holy Presence:

When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD’s house. When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying: For He is good, for His mercy endures forever. (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)

The Shekinah Glory dwelt in Jerusalem from the time that Solomon dedicated the Temple, around 950 BC, until some years before the destruction of the Temple in 586 BC, when it departed from the city (See Ezekiel chapters 9-11).

Isaiah tells us that the Shekinah Glory will shine forth once again with the return of the incarnate Christ to Jerusalem:

Arise, shine; for your light has come! And **the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.** For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but **the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.** The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. (Isaiah 60:1-3)

Gentiles will travel from the far corners of the globe to visit Jerusalem and witness the Shekinah Glory for themselves. While it was accessible only to the High Priest in former times, and then only on the Day of Atonement, it will now be visible to all who come to the Holy City, just as it was during the forty years of the Exodus. Isaiah and Zechariah confirmed this when they wrote:

When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, **a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.** (Isaiah 4:4-5)

And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, who said to him, “Run, speak to this young man, saying: ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. **For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’**” (Zechariah 2:3-5)

It is the city where the Son of God conducted a vital portion of his earthly ministry and where he suffered a cruel death to save mankind from perdition. The LORD even calls Jerusalem “My city”, “the holy city” and, through the pen of the Psalmist, “the city of our God” and “the joy of the whole earth”:

I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; He shall build **My city** and let My exiles go free, not for price nor reward, says the LORD of hosts. (Isaiah 45:13)

Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; Put on your beautiful garments, **O Jerusalem, the holy city:** for the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no longer come to you. (Isaiah 52:1)

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in **the city of our God**, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, **the joy of the whole earth**, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. (Psalm 48:1-2 KJV)



Reflect for a moment on the destructive power of Replacement Theology and the remarkable way it has obliterated the true meaning of passages such as these. A five-word pinch of yeast has leavened the entire corpus of unfulfilled prophecy and turned profound truths into poetic metaphors.

A literal reading of the Word of God confirms that, during the Millennium Age, after the horrors of the Tribulation have passed, the beautiful city of Jerusalem will truly become “the joy of the whole earth.”

The Messiah even addressed the city as the one who had rejected him and to whom he would not return until she called upon him for deliverance:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD.** (Matthew 23:37-39)

Satan is doing all he can to prevent the Jewish people, as a nation, from issuing this contrite supplication to the LORD. Replacement Theology and the allegorization of God’s Holy Word are just two of the many devious stratagems that he is using to achieve this objective.

Covenant Theology is another.

### **Covenant Theology – another artificial device**

In an attempt to circumvent the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants, some champions of Replacement Theology have proposed that God must have been working to a set of higher covenants which were not subject in any way to human caprice. Even though these supposed covenants are not mentioned in scripture, they are inferred from God’s actual dealings with man. These theologians argue that God made an overarching covenant with himself, the covenant of Redemption, before the foundation of the world. This would be fulfilled in history through two subsidiary covenants, a covenant of works, whereby Adam and Eve would enjoy certain blessings provided they continued in obedience, and a covenant of grace whereby Christ would atone for man’s fallen state by taking his entire sin debt upon himself.

The problem with Covenant Theology, as it is called, is that it functions only as an interpretative framework. Instead of starting with what the Bible actually states, it infers that God must have had a comprehensive plan from the beginning and proceeded to implement it in full in accordance with his sovereign will. This may seem a reasonable assumption, but it gives priority to something that scripture does not actually state and then allows it to determine how all of God’s subsequent dealings with man, as stated in scripture, ought to be interpreted.

This is poor theology. By turning the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants into components of a bigger plan, it undermines their scriptural integrity and leaves them vulnerable to whatever distractions the mind of man might care to invent.

The beauty of Covenant Theology – from a Replacementist standpoint – is that it makes the five-word lie seem respectable. After all, if God’s covenants with Abraham and David are subject to a higher covenant, then no matter how irrevocable they may seem from a human perspective, their ultimate fulfillment – including the *way* they will be fulfilled – is determined by factors beyond our understanding. The only covenant that God is bound by is the one he allegedly made with himself before the foundation of the world. Everything thereafter is merely the predetermined expression of his sovereign will.

Since Covenant Theology goes beyond scripture, one is obliged to consult a theologian to tell us what God *really* meant. However the Bible wasn’t written for professional theologians. It was given in plain language, to be read and studied by common men and women, in a straightforward historical, literal and grammatical manner. And in those places where common sense is needed, we use our common sense. But we never add to, subtract from, or twist out of shape what the LORD has plainly written.

It should be obvious by now that Replacement Theology, Covenant Theology, and the allegorization of scripture go hand in hand. They work together toward a common goal, namely to replace the plain meaning of the Word of God with something more appealing to our fallen nature. It is no accident that all three are directed largely at the same target – Israel and the Jewish people. Replacement Theology replaces Israel in its entirety with the church; Covenant Theology undermines the integrity and permanency of the covenants that God made with Israel; and the allegorization of prophecy allows all of God’s promises, as they pertain to Israel, to be purged from the Word of God.

## **The Great Day of the LORD**

Few Gentile Christians are taught that part of the Abrahamic Covenant applies directly to them. Believers everywhere should give close attention to Genesis 12:3 since it is just as current today as when the LORD first spoke these momentous words to Abraham:

**I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**

The LORD repeated the first part of this pronouncement in Numbers 9:24:

**Blessed is he who blesses you, and cursed is he who curses you.**

We curse Israel when we distort what the LORD has revealed regarding her past, her present and her future, her relationship with God, and her ultimate deliverance from her enemies in the End Time.

If Christians are prepared to interpret the Word of God in a literal manner when it is of benefit to themselves, while at the same time rejecting a literal interpretation when it would benefit the children of Israel, then they are being dishonest.

Satan must be immensely satisfied. With just five words he has removed large parts of the Bible, destroyed the meaning of countless prophecies which have yet to be fulfilled, deceived the church as to her true position in the Biblical scheme for mankind, and induced millions of professing Christians to reject the LORD's stated purpose for Israel.

Only a little more deception is needed to turn rejection into contempt and contempt into hatred. The Book of Revelation confirms that this is precisely where the world is now heading, a concerted political and military attack by all nations upon Israel.

The Old Testament prophets called this chilling End Time scenario "the great day of the Lord."

A considerable portion of the Bible is given over to a prophetic description of the great day of the LORD. This refers to the events leading up to the Second Advent of the Messiah, the utter destruction of the Antichrist and his forces by the King of Kings, the permanent restoration of Israel, and the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. The Messiah will reign in the flesh in Jerusalem on the throne of David and rule the entire earth in strict accordance with His holy will.

<b>The number of times the prophets refer to the Day of the LORD</b>				
	<b>"the day of the LORD"</b>	<b>"in that day"</b>	<b>"the last days"</b>	<b>"the latter days"</b>
Isaiah	4	43	1	
Zechariah	1	20		
Ezekiel	2	7		1
Jeremiah	1	5		4
Zephaniah	6	3		
Amos	2	5		
Micah		5	1	
Joel	4	1		
Hosea		2		1
Obadiah	1	1		
Daniel				2
Haggai		1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

The terms “day of the LORD” and “in that day” refer to the same series of events. And these events are not in any sense symbolic, figurative or allegorical. Each and every one of them will come to pass exactly as the prophets foretold.

The number of times this “day” is mentioned by name – at least 124 times by 12 prophets – ought to highlight just how important it is in the eyes of God. And He wants us to know this!

### **A Challenge to Replacementists**

If you are a hardened Replacementist and have difficulty coming to terms with the idea that the church has *not* replaced Israel, then I would invite you to undertake the simple test set out in **Appendix B**. Words relating specifically to Israel in End Time prophecy appear 22 times in chapter 12 of the Book of Zechariah. Your task is to replace each one with an appropriate reference to the church, in a consistent manner throughout. Naturally, your exposition should give a consistent interpretation of the chapter, in relation both to Zechariah as a whole and to the rest of scripture.

Please understand that this paper is not directed against sincere Christians who believe that the church has replaced Israel. They have been deceived by a lie. But it is definitely directed against those who preach and teach this lie even when they are familiar with the wealth of scripture which conflicts with their opinion. Given that a portion of the Promised Land was returned to the Jews in 1948, and that the Israelis assumed control of the entire city of Jerusalem in 1967 – in accordance with ancient Biblical prophecy – there is no excuse for Christians anywhere to remain under the thrall of Replacement Theology and its bogus interpretation of scripture.

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**16 December 2011**

**For further information about Israel, the End Time, and  
other aspects of born-again Biblical Christianity, visit  
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## APPENDIX A

### God's Covenants with Man

<i><b>Covenant</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Biblical Reference</b></i>	<i><b>God's promises to man (main features)</b></i>	<i><b>Current Status</b></i>
<b>Edenic</b>	Conditional	Genesis 1 and 2.	Man would have dominion over the earth and would not see death provided he did not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.	Void.
<b>Adamic</b>	Unconditional	Genesis 3.	God would send a Messiah, born of woman, to defeat Satan.	'Lamb' aspect complete. 'Lion' aspect yet to come.
<b>Noahic</b>	Unconditional	Genesis 9.	The world will never again be destroyed by a flood.	Ongoing.  Rainbow given as sign of this covenant.
<b>Abrahamic</b>	Unconditional	Genesis 17.	Fivefold promise to Abraham: 1. to multiply his descendants into a great nation; 2. to bestow material and spiritual prosperity on this nation in the land of Canaan, which would remain in their possession forever; 3. to exalt Abraham's name among the nations; 4. to be the source of a great blessing upon the world (as the birth nation of the Messiah); 5. to bless all Gentiles who bless the nation and to curse all Gentiles who curse the nation.	Ongoing.  Note that #5 applies directly to Gentiles.
<b>Land</b>	Unconditional	Deuteronomy 29 and 30.	A detailed reaffirmation of the land promise given to Abraham.	To be fulfilled in every detail in the Kingdom age.

<b>Mosaic</b>	Conditional	Exodus 23, 24 and 34.	<p>Subject to their observance of His laws, commandments, statutes and ordinances, the people of the nation Israel would enjoy God's constant care and protection, a multitude of blessings, and would be set high above all nations.</p> <p>Correspondingly, if they failed in their observance, they would suffer severe punishment – including eviction from the Promised Land for a protracted period – as specified in Deuteronomy 28.</p>	<p>Finished.</p> <p>[The destruction of the Temple in 70AD made it impossible for the Jewish people to continue to observe the Mosaic Law as prescribed.]</p> <p>Circumcision was given as a seal of this covenant.</p>
<b>Davidic</b>	Unconditional	2 Samuel 7 and 22. Psalm 89.	<p>The Davidic Covenant added further detail to the Adamic and Abrahamic Covenants. The House of David would be the royal line through which the Messiah would come. This House would rule forever on the throne of Israel.</p>	Ongoing.
<b>New</b>	Subject to personal faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the only begotten Son of God.	Jeremiah 31. Ezekiel 36.	<p>The day will come when the LORD will put his law in the heart of the House of Israel; he shall be their God and they shall all know him; he will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.</p> <p>The New Covenant replaces the Mosaic Covenant but comprehends and completes the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants as they relate to the faithful remnant of Israel.</p> <p>The New Covenant creates the New Man wherein Jew and Gentile alike are made sinless before God. [Ephesians 2:15]</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>This is the Covenant of which the church already partakes, not as a nation but as a collection of individual members in the body of Christ.</p> <p>Gentiles are adopted into the New Covenant and grafted onto the olive tree through their saving faith in Christ.</p>

## APPENDIX B

### Zechariah: Chapter 12 [KJV]

[1] The burden of the word of the LORD for **Israel**, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. [2] Behold, I will make **Jerusalem** a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against **Judah** and against **Jerusalem**. [3] And in that day will I make **Jerusalem** a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. [4] In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of **Judah**, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. [5] And the governors of **Judah** shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of **Jerusalem** shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. [6] In that day will I make the governors of **Judah** like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and **Jerusalem** shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in **Jerusalem**. [7] The LORD also shall save the tents of **Judah** first, that the glory of the house of **David** and the glory of the inhabitants of **Jerusalem** do not magnify themselves against **Judah**. [8] In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as **David**; and the house of **David** shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. [9] And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against **Jerusalem**. [10] And I will pour upon the house of **David**, and upon the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. [11] In that day shall there be a great mourning in **Jerusalem**, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. [12] And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; [13] The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; [14] All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

A short interpretation of this chapter is given here, based on its plain meaning:

**1** The prophecy of the LORD for the children of Israel is now given. **2** When the nations [*of the world*] besiege the city of Jerusalem, they will encounter a great terror. **3** All peoples and nations that oppose Israel at that time will either be destroyed or incur severe retribution. **4** All who participate in this military attack against Jerusalem will be utterly routed, their minds deranged and their weapons destroyed. **5** The Jewish leaders will trust in the LORD and will take heart in the knowledge that the Jewish inhabitants of the city will do likewise. **6** The Jewish leaders will utterly destroy the vast armies gathered against them. **7** All of the Jews will share in the victory, not just the leadership. **8** The Messiah [“the angel of the LORD”] will defend and protect his people, empowering them by miraculous means so that even the weakest of them will be formidable. **9** The LORD will destroy both the armies themselves and the nations that sent them. **10** The LORD will pour His supernatural strength upon the Jewish people and save them from destruction. They will recognise the person of the LORD as the Messiah, Jesus Christ, whom they rejected. The shock of recognition will cause each individual Jew to mourn and weep bitterly. **11-14** The collective grief will fill the whole of Jerusalem and the entire region.



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# Psalm 83 and the Coming Wave of Attacks Against Israel

by Jeremy James

The Bible has numerous prophecies relating to the future of Israel, many of which have yet to be fulfilled. Psalm 83 is one such prophecy.

It describes a time when all of the nations surrounding Israel – every one of which is now Islamic – will conspire together to destroy her.

Both the Koran (the recorded will of Allah) and the Hadith (the sayings of Muhammad) demand the subjugation or murder of all Jews (and Christians, too, by the way). We know that the events described in the Psalm have not yet reached their full prophetic expression because the previous attacks by an Islamic alliance against Israel (in 1948, 1967 and 1973) did not include some of the modern enemies mentioned in the Psalm, notably Turkey, Iran and the Gulf States. [The text of Psalm 83 is given below.]

The following table gives a flavour of the confrontation in prospect and the political entities that are now conspiring to destroy this tiny nation:

	Ancient nation cited in Psalm 83	Corresponding modern nation	Avowed modern enemy
1	<i>The tents of <b>Edom</b> and the <b>Ishmaelites</b>; Moab and the Hagrites;</i>	<b><u>Edomites</u></b> Descendants of Esau, brother of Jacob. Also called Edom (meaning <i>red</i> , after he bartered his birthright for a bowl of red stew). Their territory was known in Roman times as Idumaea. The modern equivalent of SW <b>Jordan</b> and part of the Negev.	Muslim Brotherhood. Certain Palestinian groups.
2	<i>The tents of Edom and the <b>Ishmaelites</b>; Moab and the Hagrites;</i>	<b><u>Ishmaelites</u></b> Descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham by Hagar and half-brother of Isaac. Loosely equivalent to the modern Arab race and, specifically, the people of <b>Arabia</b> .	Wahabi sect of Islam.
3	<i>The tents of Edom and the <b>Ishmaelites</b>; <b>Moab</b> and the Hagrites;</i>	<b><u>Moabites</u></b> Descendants of Moab, son of Lot by his eldest daughter. Occupied territory east of the Dead Sea, roughly equivalent to central <b>Jordan</b> .	Muslim Brotherhood. Certain Palestinian groups.

4	<i>The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the <b>Hagrites</b>;</i>	<b><u>Hagrites</u></b> Generally accepted to be a reference to the descendants of Hagar, who was Abraham's Egyptian-born concubine. Could be a reference to modern <b>Egypt</b> .	Muslim Brotherhood.
5	<i><b>Gebal</b>, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;</i>	<b><u>Gebalites</u></b> Residents of Gebal, a coastal city north of Beirut, and known to the Greeks as Byblos. Equivalent to northern <b>Lebanon</b> .	Hezbollah. Certain Palestinian groups.
6	<i>Gebal, <b>Ammon</b>, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;</i>	<b><u>Ammonites</u></b> Descendants of Ammon, son of Lot by his eldest daughter. Occupied territory east of the Jordan river, roughly equivalent to northern <b>Jordan</b> .	Muslim Brotherhood. Certain Palestinian groups.
7	<i>Gebal, Ammon, and <b>Amalek</b>; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;</i>	<b><u>Amalekites</u></b> An ancient tribe, believed to have incorporated descendants of Amalek, grandson of Esau. Occupied territory that appeared to stretch from Sinai in modern <b>Egypt</b> to southern <b>Jordan</b> and possibly part of northern <b>Arabia</b> .	Muslim Brotherhood. Wahabi sect of Islam.
8	<i>Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; <b>Philistia</b> with the inhabitants of Tyre;</i>	<b><u>Philistines</u></b> An ancient people who occupied the southern coastal strip of modern Israel, which includes <b>Gaza</b> .	Hamas. Fatah. Muslim Brotherhood.
9	<i>Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;</i>	<b><u>Tyreneans</u></b> Inhabitants of an ancient Phoenician city on the coast of modern <b>Lebanon</b> .	Hezbollah. Certain Palestinian groups.
10	<i><b>Assyria</b> also has joined with them;</i>	<b><u>Assyrians</u></b> At its most extensive, the Assyrian empire covered much of the territory known today as <b>Iraq</b> , <b>Syria</b> , <b>Lebanon</b> , <b>Jordan</b> , northern <b>Egypt</b> , western <b>Iran</b> , eastern <b>Turkey</b> , northern <b>Arabia</b> and the <b>Gulf States</b> .	Muslim Brotherhood. Iranian Ruling Regime. Hezbollah. Hamas. Islamic Jihad. Turkish Islamists.

All the groups in the righthand column above are dedicated to the destruction of the modern state of Israel and the conquest of her territory. They are the modern equivalent to the enemies of Israel described in Psalm 83 “who said, Let us take for ourselves the pastures of God for a possession.”

The ever-increasing co-operation between the enemies of Israel, as well as the considerable increase in their respective military power, seem destined to bring about, before very long, the events described in Psalm 83.

How does the LORD describe His response? He has stated again and again that the land of Israel, “the pastures of God,” belong to Him alone. As His chosen, albeit wayward people, the Jews are allowed to settle there and to treat it as their own. He has made it quite plain that no other people or nation has that right. The Arabs and the Islamic peoples generally have more than enough land and enough wealth. The Lord has been very generous to them, but they are not satisfied. They intend to bring His wrath upon themselves simply to obtain this tiny strip of land and add it to the vast tracts that they already possess but largely neglect.

Note too that the Word of God includes the following remarkable statement: “And those who hate You have lifted up their head.” This makes it abundantly clear that the god of Islam is NOT the God of the Bible.

The Psalmist calls upon the Lord to deal with the enemies of Israel as He had done in former times – “Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, that they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth.”

He refers to Zebah and Zalmunna, two kings of Midian, who boasted that they would take possession of the pastures of God. Gideon set out after them with his army. Along the way he asked the people of the town of Succoth to give bread to his men, but they refused, claiming that he had yet to subdue Zebah and Zalmunna. The implication here, it would seem, was that Gideon’s ambition exceeded his authority. He vowed to pursue the enemy and, having executed Zebah and Zalmunna, to return and punish the people of Succoth for their arrogance – which he duly did:

“And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briars, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.” (Judges 8:16)

The residents of Penuel, who gave the same response to Gideon as the people of Succoth, suffered an even more severe punishment for, on his return to Penuel, he “slew the men of the city.”

The Bible notes that, at the time that Zebah and Zalmunna were captured and executed for their crimes, Gideon took the ornaments that hung about the necks of their camels. Strong's concordance, H7720, tells us that the Hebrew word translated as 'ornaments' in English literally meant 'little moons,' which are akin to the crescent moons seen today throughout Islam. The crescent moon, which represents the moon god Allah, is probably the principal symbol of Jihad and Islamic power in the world today. Psalm 83 is telling us, therefore, that in destroying Zebah and Zalmunna, Gideon was destroying the representatives of the same spiritual entity that now empowers Islam.

Gideon prefigures Christ Jesus and the incredible work that he will do when he returns.

Many today, among the nations of the world, are like the people of Succoth and Penuel. They withhold their goodwill from Israel and omit all mention of her in their prayers, if they pray at all. They believe that Israel's ambition exceeds her authority, but in so doing they forget that the Lord is sovereign, that he honours all of his promises and that his word will prevail. Scripture is telling us that those who persist in taking the same attitude to Israel as did the people of Succoth and Penuel will also be held to account.

In this age of great apostasy and deception, there is no middle ground. The promise that the Lord made to Abraham has never been rescinded – "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you" (Genesis 12:3)

Israel is the focus of everything that is happening in the world today. Satan is determined to destroy her and, in so doing, to prove God wrong. If he can do that, he reasons, then God has no moral right to condemn him to the lake of fire.

If you have not already come to Christ and, in true repentance, accepted him as your Lord and Saviour, then I would invite you to reflect humbly on your relationship with the Creator, "the Most High over all the earth," and ask Him to guide you in the right direction in this fateful hour.

### **Psalm 83**

- (1) Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace,  
and do not be still, O God!
- (2) For behold, Your enemies make a tumult;  
And those who hate You have lifted up their head.
- (3) They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted  
together against Your sheltered ones.
- (4) They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation,  
that the name of Israel may be remembered no more."
- (5) For they have consulted together with one consent;  
They form a confederacy against You:

- (6) The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites;
- (7) Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
- (8) Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah
- (9) Deal with them as with Midian, as with Sisera, as with Jabin at the Brook Kishon,
- (10) Who perished at En Dor, Who became as refuse on the earth.
- (11) Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb, Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
- (12) Who said, "Let us take for ourselves the pastures of God for a possession."
- (13) O my God, make them like the whirling dust, like the chaff before the wind!
- (14) As the fire burns the woods, and as the flame sets the mountains on fire,
- (15) So pursue them with Your tempest, and frighten them with Your storm.
- (16) Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Your name, O LORD.
- (17) Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish,
- (18) That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth.

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**May 12, 2011**

**Previous papers on Israel by this author include**

[Proof of the Legal and Moral Right of Israel to Exist as a Sovereign State](#)

[How the Bible Foretold, in Two Places, the Foundation Date for Israel - 1948](#)

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# **The Cotton-wool Gospel and the Emerging Church Movement**

**by Robert Pye**

Throughout the New Testament, the apostles warn again and again about the infiltration of the church by wolves in sheep's clothing. These warnings are unusually strong and are meant to put all Christians on alert. Alas, few Christians have been paying attention. The wolves today are exceptionally active...and exceptionally clever in how they pursue their objectives and misrepresent, distort and undermine the true message of Christ. Many of them are trained and funded by anti-Christian organisations whose goal is the destruction of true Bible-based Christianity. Indeed, some highly respected 'Christian' authors and leaders today are willing servants of these antichrist groups.

We shouldn't be surprised by this. Rather it is something we should expect Satan to do in his ongoing quest to destroy Christianity and lure even more victims into his web of deceit. Deception is the hallmark of the age we live in.

The following is a list of some of the key differences between true Biblical Christianity and the 'new' watered-down version which has taken hold in the United States and elsewhere. In my view, every true born-again Christian should become familiar with this cotton-wool gospel, the clever way it is packaged and presented, and the real agenda behind it.

This 'new' type of Christianity is often referred to as the Emerging Church Movement. Not all churches which subscribe to this philosophy are formally linked to the Emerging Church or have adopted all of its characteristics. Nevertheless, a significant number of the following features will be evident in most of them, even in churches which formerly stood with true conviction for the gospel of Christ.

To make the list a little easier to follow, I have sorted the characteristics into groups. However, like the leaven that the Lord warned us about, each has a tendency to spread until the entire body is affected. So, if your church has only a few of these characteristics at present, be watchful nonetheless – the Emergent mind-set has an unusual appetite for new ideas.

A great deal more could be said about each of the characteristics, but a short summary must suffice:

## **God's Judgment**

1. There is little emphasis in the Emerging Church on the judgment of God and the offensiveness of sin in the eyes of the LORD. The sinfulness of sin is quietly pushed into the background. The degree to which our sin offends and pains the LORD is all but forgotten
2. As a result there is little or no emphasis on repentance or the need for repentance. Christians are hardly ever reminded that even after they are saved they are still sinners and need to repent daily. True Biblical repentance involves turning away from sin and, with God's help, changing those aspects of our lives which are displeasing to Him.

3. The fear of God is either ignored or greatly downplayed. This is central to Scripture but it hardly finds a mention in the cotton-wool gospel. Instead the emphasis is almost exclusively on God as 'love,' as though His love was in some way separate from His impartial judgment and His awesome holiness.
4. This in turn means that the concept of hell is pushed far into the background. When it is discussed it is generally treated as a term that has often been misunderstood or over-emphasized in the past. The cotton-wool gospel finds it very difficult to preach that God will judge and punish sinners. Many prefer to think of hell as annihilation rather than a real place of torment.
5. A net consequence of all this is that the Emerging Church has almost completely lost sight of the need for unconditional, repentant obedience to the will of God. Emerging Church leaders place little emphasis on the central importance of unwavering obedience to the word of God and His unchanging commandments.

## **The Bible as the Only Word of God**

6. There is a marked shift away from the Bible as the infallible and literal word of God. It is increasingly being seen by the Emerging Church as a 'wisdom' book, much like the so-called holy books of other world religions.
7. There is very little emphasis on daily Bible study or any Bible study regime. Instead members are urged to study the writings of modern experts. Many of the books recommended by Emerging Church leaders are in step with the Emerging Church agenda and often contain material which Christians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century would have found offensive.
8. There is a strong emphasis on psychology and modern self-help philosophy in the Emerging Church movement. Many passages in Scripture are being interpreted as though they were early versions of modern psychological concepts.
9. There is no standard Bible translation. Instead Christians are being encouraged to seek out a translation that suits their particular needs, including translations based on superficial scholarship and weak theology. Some of these so-called 'bibles' are little more than a human paraphrase of the original text.
10. The Emerging Church is very vague about the Rapture, the Tribulation and the Millennium. It tries to justify this by interpreting many passages in Scripture as allegorical rather than literal.
11. The Emerging Church is very slow to defend the description of creation that is given in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Many of its leaders endorse Intelligent Design, which implies that God guided the development of life over a long period of time to 'create' the life-forms that we see today. This doctrine is unbiblical.
12. The Emerging Church tends to ignore prophecy, even though around a quarter of the Bible is prophetic and half of its prophecies still lie in the future. This ties in with the way the Emerging Church downplays God's judgment. Since most prophecies which have yet to be fulfilled are tied into God's judgment in one way or another, the study of prophecy, especially as it relates to the End Time, is seriously neglected.



## True Salvation

13. The Emerging Church seldom mentions the blood of Christ and substitutionary atonement. Many newcomers are given the impression that Christ died for us because he loved us (which is true) but not that he died *in our place*. Increasingly Jesus is being portrayed as a perfect role model instead of Lord and Saviour, our High Priest and Intercessor with the Father.
14. The term *Born Again* is virtually unknown in the Emerging Church. The idea that true salvation requires that we be born again is hardly ever mentioned. Instead salvation is reduced to the formal acceptance of Jesus, membership of a Christian church, and participation in Christian fellowship.
15. The Bible clearly teaches that good works are the fruit of salvation and *not* the cause. The Emerging Church places a lot of attention on good works and social programs. However, this is being done in such a way as to blur the distinction between salvation by works and salvation as a pure, unconditional gift from God through the blood of Christ – a gift which man cannot earn. The Emerging Church presupposes the continual expansion of Christianity and the ongoing improvement in living conditions throughout the world – which is very different from what the Bible teaches.

## New Age Sympathies

16. There is an over-emphasis on the ‘feel good’ factor in the Emerging Church. Christians are urged to feel good about themselves and to stop thinking of themselves as fallen, sinful creatures. The idea that people are basically good is a key part of the New Age philosophy and contradicts what the Bible teaches about the fallen, sinful nature of man.
17. Christians are being taught that the Bible is designed, at least in part, to promote human welfare and prosperity and that it contains ‘principles’ for material success. All one needs to do is follow the formula.
18. The idea that God is unconditional love is a major component of the New Age movement, but the understanding of ‘love’ in the New Age is very different from that of the Bible. The Bible makes it perfectly clear that God’s love is *not* unconditional. The New Age understanding of love completely excludes God’s judgment and righteousness, as well as our need for total obedience to His holy Word. Not surprisingly, therefore, this phony concept of love is very popular today and has been incorporated, perhaps unknowingly, into the Emerging Church movement. This in turn is leading to what is called ‘universalism,’ the belief that, in the fullness of time, through God’s supposedly unconditional love, everyone will be saved and few souls, if any, will be condemned to hell.
19. Like the New Age movement, the Emerging Church attaches a lot of importance to experience. Followers are often encouraged to interpret Scripture in accordance with their experiences and to live accordingly. This is the very opposite of what the Bible teaches. We should interpret our experiences in accordance with Scripture and not the other way around.

20. The Emerging Church is very fond of ‘techniques.’ These are portrayed as tried and proven methods for getting closer to the LORD. Chief among these is contemplation, especially as it is taught in the writings of Thomas Merton, the Catholic monk who died in 1968. Among the other techniques advocated by the Emerging Church leadership are meditation, visualization, yoga, chanting, repetitive prayer, and *lectio divina*. The Bible does not teach any techniques based on the use of visualization, imagination or the emptying of one’s mind. Rather it warns against all such practices. The meditation mentioned in the Bible is thoughtful reflection on the word of God and His holy works – which is very different from modern forms of meditation. Instead of warning of these dangers the Emerging Church actually promotes them.
21. The Emerging Church is also very open to the use of dreams for spiritual purposes. This too is central to the New Age movement. While God may sometimes express His holy will for us through our dreams, the regular use of dreams as a means of interpreting or discerning the will of God in our lives is fraught with difficulty and wide open to abuse by deceiving spirits. Loyal disciples of the Emerging Church movement are not warned of the need to be extremely discerning in this area and to measure any seemingly significant dream against the exacting standard of God’s holy Word.

Note: The parallels between the Emerging Church movement and the New Age movement are both striking and disturbing. A more complete study of this may be found in my paper, [The New Age Movement is Designed to Destroy True Biblical Christianity](#)

## Ecumenism

22. The Evangelical Church in the US moved away from the principle of Separation in the 1940s. *Separation* is the Biblical doctrine that Christians should separate themselves from non-believers and worldly values as much as possible. The rejection of this principle is now leading many churches to go further and seek common ground with other religions. The Emerging Church is very sympathetic to the view that Christianity should be placed on a more Ecumenical footing. For example, the document, *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* (1994) was signed by many leading Evangelical and Roman Catholic scholars in the US.
23. The Emerging Church believes that Christians have something to learn from other faiths, including Buddhism, Islam and the contemplative tradition of the Roman Catholic church. They believe that all religions have *some* truth and that Christians should learn to identify this truth and use it as a basis for inter-faith dialogue. Instead of issuing a loud warning against the dangers of ecumenism, the Emerging Church is both supporting it and taking active measures to promote it.

## Israel

24. The Emerging Church is rapidly moving away from a focus on Israel, as well as God’s promises to the Jewish people. Like the Roman Catholic church, the Emerging Church is attracted to ‘Replacement Theology,’ which teaches that all of God’s promises to Israel transferred to the church after Pentecost.

## **Outer form of the Church**

25. The Emerging Church attaches undue importance to strong organization and effective forms of management, often with reference to what has worked best in the business world. The criteria that are used to determine what is best for the church are often those of the world and not those of the New Testament.
26. The Emerging Church directs a great deal of its activity and energy toward increasing its membership. It is concerned less with bringing sinners to repentance than with opening the door to new members in a congenial and agreeable manner and trusting them to come to repentance in their own time.
27. Many of the songs used by the Emerging Church movement have weak scriptural content or inappropriate music.

## **A Judge-not Mentality**

28. While everything we do should be done with love, this love is not permissive. It is not tolerant of sin but includes measured, thoughtful rebuke and correction where appropriate. However, the Emerging Church is deeply committed to a 'judge not' attitude towards one's neighbour and even toward society in general. Even though the Bible teaches that all Christians should endeavour to ensure the purity of church doctrine and the godly conduct of its members, the 'judge not' philosophy – which is designed to promote tolerance and inclusiveness – does not allow them to voice their concerns.
29. The Emerging Church endorses the principle, 'In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.' There is no scriptural basis for this. The principle is used by the Emerging Church to justify its ecumenism, the looseness of its theology, its active participation in the world, and its de facto acceptance of many worldly values. The Bible clearly teaches that many of today's social norms are in conflict with what our heavenly Father requires of us. We don't judge the sinner but we are required to judge the sin. The Emerging Church movement finds it very difficult to do this and routinely turns a blind eye to homosexual behaviour and divorce.
30. Since the Emerging Church is non-judgmental with regard to other forms of Christianity ("in non-essentials liberty"), it hardly ever warns the flock of apostasy, false teachers, or the countless threats posed by the world to the purity of Christian doctrine.
31. Many Emerging Church leaders are critical of what they describe as 'Christian fundamentalists,' die-hards who stick to a supposedly narrow interpretation of Scripture. In its pursuit of 'tolerance' and inclusiveness, the Emerging Church movement is prepared on occasion to set aside or compromise the unconditional authority of the Bible. Once this starts to happen, further slippage is inevitable.

## Beware of the Enemy

32. The Emerging church hardly ever speaks of Satan as a powerful supernatural being, an individual bent upon destroying Christianity and luring everyone he can to eternal damnation. They downplay his existence, his power, his methods, and his goals. And they greatly underestimate his control over this world.
33. The Emerging Church gives little recognition to the very grave dangers posed by the occult, New Age philosophy, eastern mysticism, yoga, and so forth. Neither does it seem to regard the demonic realm as an ever-present threat to modern man.

**CLOSING COMMENT:** None of the above characteristics (1-33) have any scriptural foundation and many of them are in direct conflict with Scripture. The Emerging Church teaches a cotton-wool gospel which has no power to save anyone. It is warm and soft and pleasing to the touch, but devoid of spiritual nourishment. All who subscribe to it are being led gently toward the long-planned One World Religion which will usher in the Antichrist.

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent...”  
– Lord Jesus, *The Book of Revelation* 2:5

Further reading:

*Faith Undone* by Roger Oakland  
*A Time of Departing* by Ray Yungen  
*Redefining Christianity* by Bob DeWaay  
*New Evangelicalism* by David Cloud  
*What Is the Emerging Church?* by David Cloud  
*The Great Evangelical Disaster* by Francis Schaeffer

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**Ireland**

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# **The New Age Movement is Designed to Destroy True Biblical Christianity**

**by Robert Pye**

Many Christians have heard of the New Age Movement but are unclear about its philosophy and its purpose. They don't understand that the various cults and 'isms' which have been created in the past fifty years or so have been established as part of a plan to draw people away from Christianity. This plan is well-funded and carefully co-ordinated by generational Luciferian families and occult groups. They are trying to undermine and destroy the remnants of true Christianity in the world today and bring about a New World Order. A major goal of the New World Order confederacy is the creation of a One World Religion. This will likely have some semblance of Christianity but will be antichrist in spirit and substance.



If one is to understand the dangers posed by the New Age movement, it is vital that every born-again Christian be able to recognise the countless ways in which New Age ideas are infiltrating modern thought and culture. It is happening so subtly and in so many guises that it is difficult to address effectively unless one understands the mentality behind it.

In this paper I will describe the main elements in the New Age philosophy and where they are leading. Please bear in mind that every one of the beliefs in the 'New Age Deception' section (below) are false. They are utterly unbiblical and poison of the worst kind. I feel it is necessary to say this since some New Age beliefs can actually seem quite plausible if one comes upon them in a new or unfamiliar setting. For example, some Christian leaders and pastors have recommended the movie, *Avatar*, without realizing that it is intensely New Age and filled from start to finish with Luciferian philosophy. In my experience, many sincere Christians today already subscribe unwittingly to a few New Age beliefs, never having considered where they came from or that they may possibly be in conflict with Scripture. Among these beliefs are universalism, ecumenism and modernism (We will discuss these later). Remember, Satan is the Great Deceiver. He knows his job – and the human heart – extremely well.

I have already written about the dangers of the New Age movement in my earlier paper, [\*\*\*Eighteen New Age Lies – An Occult Attack on Christianity\*\*\*](#). The purpose of this follow-up paper is to describe the New Age system as a coherent world view and so make it easier for born-again Christians to understand it and to recognize its countless manifestations in modern culture, the media and elsewhere.

## **- New Age Deception -**

### **WARNING: A summary of the New Age deception starts here**

#### **Soul**

1. Soul is divine. Man is a god but does not know it. Only the body dies. Death is natural.

#### **Salvation**

2. There is no need for salvation since no-one is damned. Man is not fallen and has no need to repent. He is on earth to gain experience. The Supreme Being never intended that even a single soul would perish. All are going back to the high heavenly worlds, at their own pace.

#### **Judgment**

3. God never judges man. All men are basically good but lacking in spiritual maturity. An impersonal law of cause and effect is in operation which helps to bring man to maturity. We reap only what we sow. The law of karma is impartial, mechanical and universal. All souls eventually work through all of their karma and reach the high levels of heaven.

#### **Spirit**

4. The universe is filled with a spiritual energy which is both supremely intelligent and infinitely creative. This is the Force (cosmic energy, cosmic intelligence, universal spirit, prana, mana, elan vital, prakriti, manitou, etc).

#### **New Age methods for contacting the Force**

5. A New Ager can contact the Force in three ways: (a) imagination or visualization; (b) meditation, contemplation or yoga, and (c) specific rituals such as chanting, sacred dance, rosaries, ascetic practices, invocations, astrology (including rites linked to astrological charts or the astrological calendar), mandalas, vision quests, shamanic rites, and the use of charged objects such as talismans and crystals.

#### **Creation**

6. All creation is dualistic, yin-yang or a blend of positive and negative. Thus everything must balance. Balance leads to harmony. Spiritual growth comes through the harmonisation of opposites and inner balance. There are many levels of creation, the 'Earth Plane' being but one of them.

#### **Changing one's reality**

7. The Force is responsive to our thoughts. Thoughts are 'things'. To change his reality the New Ager believes he must change his fundamental thinking processes. This is sometimes referred to as a change in consciousness.

**Initiations**

8. The New Age movement attaches great importance to degrees and initiations. Each degree or initiation is meant to lift one into a higher level of consciousness. The promise that he will 'take the next step' if he persists along the path is a key motivating factor for every New Ager.

**Unity of Consciousness**

9. Even though all things are dualistic in manifestation, the whole of creation is spiritually One, a unified field of pure consciousness.

**Good and Evil are Relative**

10. Since everything is one, good and evil are only relative terms. Therefore we should not judge or condemn others since they are operating from within their own level of consciousness. At some stage they will gain enough 'experience' to make a leap in consciousness and advance to a higher level.

**Soul's journey over many lives**

11. Soul reincarnates over many lifetimes in order to gain enough 'experience' to reach the level of spiritual maturity known as 'God Consciousness' or 'God Realization.' There are even levels beyond this which only the most spiritually advanced souls or Masters can reach.

**Living and Ascended Masters**

12. The New Age teaches that soul was extremely immature when it first came to earth. Then the cycle of reincarnation began and it gradually 'unfolded' into higher levels of consciousness. The Supreme Being (who is NEVER identified with the Lord God of the Bible) arranged for some highly evolved souls to come back to earth to 'guide' the evolution of mankind. These are often referred to as 'Masters.' Jesus is usually portrayed as a 'master' but not a very high one.

**Age of Aquarius**

13. The so-called Masters are trying to lift mankind as a whole to the level where all violence and discord are universally banished. The divinely ordained threshold, known as the Age of Aquarius, is fast approaching where mankind will make this momentous leap in Cosmic evolution. Peace and tolerance will reign everywhere. However some members of mankind will resist this quantum transition into a higher state of being. They will cling to the old ways. In doing so they will prove themselves unfit or unworthy to receive this new state of consciousness. Their resistance may even pose a threat to the rest of mankind by contaminating the planetary consciousness. If this is the case then they will have to be removed, relocated or re-educated (depending on the branch of the New Age one follows).

**Man cannot communicate personally with God**

14. The Masters are one's only bridge to the Supreme Being. The Absolute is utterly unknowable by puny man. Only the Masters have seen and spoken with the Supreme Being. Thus man can only communicate with the Force and with the Masters until he has unfolded spiritually to a sufficiently high level where direct contact with the Supreme Being becomes possible.

### **Experiencing the Light**

15. There are different ways a New Ager can determine whether he is advancing spiritually. Chief among these is seeing the inner Light. The Light is considered the radiant love of the Supreme Being. The purpose of each new initiation or degree is to bring more Light into the life of the individual.

Note: This is also the case in Freemasonry, which is an older form of Satanic deception and purveyor of the same set of lies. The 'light' of the New Age is actually the light of Lucifer, the Light Bearer (The name Lucifer actually means Light Bearer or Light Giver). Christ referred to this counterfeit light when he gave the following warning to his disciples:

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! (Matthew 6:22-23) [NKJV]

### **Christianity is outmoded and potentially harmful**

16. Many branches of the New Age teach, often in a subtle way, that Christianity is the main barrier to the evolution of mankind. This includes constant critical references to the God of the Old Testament. The New Age movement states vehemently that no single religion has what it calls a monopoly on truth. In particular, the New Age utterly rejects the central doctrine of Biblical Christianity, namely that man is fallen, an abject sinner in the eyes of God, and that he must repent and be cleansed of his sins. The New Age completely and utterly rejects the need for a Redeemer.

### **Planet Earth is a living entity**

17. The planet is a living organism which is highly sensitive to man's state of consciousness. Man must learn to live in harmony with Nature or Gaia. Actions which harm the planet must be restrained and the people responsible re-educated or eliminated through population control and eugenics. Over-population is a really serious threat to the planet and must be tackled as a matter of urgency. Unless their numbers are kept under control, humans are nothing but parasites and a great danger to the planet's delicate eco-system.

### **All life is evolving**

18. Everything is evolving. Mankind evolved from lower organisms under the direction of the Cosmic intelligence. The universe itself is evolving.

### **Aliens and UFOs are real**

19. There are intelligent life-forms on other planets. Some are more evolved than mankind. Some are friendly and some are unfriendly. The more highly evolved, friendly aliens will contact earth in due course when mankind has reached the necessary level of spiritual maturity or when a crisis of such grave proportions arises that direct intervention is necessary.

### **Love is ALL**

20. All is LOVE. Men must set aside judgment and intolerance and embrace the principle of divine love. Religions only divide and separate people. The whole of mankind should convert to the universal religion of divine love. This is the divine plan. And since it is the will of the Supreme Being, anyone who resists it will be left behind. They won't be able to evolve any further.



**Psychotropic Drugs**

21. The discriminating use of drugs and mind-altering chemicals is permitted, and even desirable at times, as a means of opening one's consciousness.

**Abortion is an ethical choice and a human right**

22. The human body is just a receptacle for soul. A woman can abort a fetus at any time since she is only destroying the receptacle. The soul of the unborn child knew in advance that the woman would do this and had agreed to the experience. [Born-again Christians know that abortion is actually a form of child sacrifice.]

**Homosexual behaviour is an ethical choice and a human right**

23. Sex is only for pleasure and should not be linked fundamentally to procreation. What two consenting adults do in the privacy of the bedroom is their own business. Homosexuality is normal for some people, either genetically or as a lifestyle choice.

**Divorce is an ethical choice and a human right**

24. Since humans are evolving spiritually, partners in marriage may not always possess a compatible state of consciousness. Thus a marriage may dissolve because of such changes. Divorce is normal, a human right. It is the karma of the children affected to be born into such a family. Sometimes two people may marry for only a very short time to work out some shared karma from a mutual past life.

**Transcending the little self and emptying one's mind**

25. Everyone should meditate/contemplate daily and empty his or her mind. Union with the Force can be achieved only by setting aside one's 'little self' and merging with the greater cosmic consciousness. This takes self-discipline. New Agers are encouraged to invite the Force into their lives and allow it to direct them.

**The Inner Guide or Ascended Master**

26. The individual should learn to contact his inner master or spiritual guide through meditation, contemplation and dreams. One's inner guide is an Ascended Master or an angelic being appointed by such a master to guide the individual and assist him in his spiritual evolution (unfoldment).

**The Outer Master or Guru**

27. A guru can help one make better contact with the Inner Master. He takes the place of God in one's life and provides divine direction and instruction. He also gives the true initiation, as well as further, more advanced initiations as one unfolds into greater levels of consciousness. A guru can also help the individual work through his karma.

**Recalling past lives**

28. The recall of past lives is a sign of greater unfoldment. The Masters can recall all of their past incarnations. The practice of recalling one's past lives will assist with the resolution of past life karma. Some of this recall occurs in the dream state. Less unfolded souls may need hypnosis to help them recall their past lives.

**Communication with the Dead**

29. The dead can be contacted through dreams, through mediumship or through out-of-body travel. They dwell temporarily in one of many levels of heaven, such as the Astral Plane, until it is time for them to reincarnate again. The heaven they dwell in is determined by their level of consciousness and their spiritual unfoldment.

### **The Divine Feminine**

30. The masculine principle, by itself, is dangerous and unbalanced. Man must learn to contact the eternal feminine, the Goddess principle, if he is to unfold spiritually. Soul is neither male nor female but an androgynous being. Goddess worship is a key feature of many New Age groups.

### **Dreams and Out-of-Body Experiences**

31. Out-of-body experiences are natural by-products of human evolution. The more evolved a soul is, the further it can travel into the higher (inner) worlds while still living here on earth. Some of this occurs in one's dreams. Dreams are imperfectly remembered experiences outside of the human body. New Agers are encouraged to meet their spiritual guides in their dreams and to follow their instructions. Many dreams are symbolic and need to be interpreted.

### **Energy Medicine**

32. The New Age emphasizes the use of 'energy medicine' and techniques for adjusting the body's so-called energy fields. The human aura is influenced by one's thoughts and may be seen and diagnosed by a psychically qualified person.

### **The Christian Bible is a manmade artefact**

33. No book can hold all of truth. All scripture is purely relative, written by fallible men working from a limited state of consciousness. The Bible is nothing but history and poetry. Jesus was a good man, a lower-level Master who tried to show the world that everyone becomes Christ by following the path of peace and tolerance.

### **Christ is a state of consciousness**

34. Christ is not a person but a state of consciousness. Jesus had the Christ consciousness but so too had many other religious teachers, such as Buddha, Lao-Tzu, Zoroaster, Muhammad, St Francis of Assisi, Ramakrishna, and so forth. There are higher states beyond the Christ consciousness.

### **Truth is given by the Masters**

35. As mankind unfolds, more of the truth is given by one of the Ascended Masters through written works channelled by qualified human authors. These are dictated on the inner planes and recorded by the spiritually receptive author for transmission to mankind.

### **All religions are valid**

36. All religions are valid and possess some portion of truth. One must be tolerant and accepting of all religious traditions and viewpoints. The Supreme Being has created many different religions to cater to the many levels of consciousness among mankind. Any religion which claims to have a 'monopoly' on truth is deemed intolerant and possibly harmful to the evolution of the planet.

**- End of Warning -**

### **The New Age Plan of Deception**

Even though it is fairly lengthy, the above list does not exhaust the doctrines and beliefs of the New Age. Not all branches hold every one of them, but the majority hold most of them.

The New Age is mainly a re-packaged form of Theosophy, as set out in the writings of Helena Blavatsky and Alice Bailey – two high-level practitioners of witchcraft. Their writings in turn are a re-packaged form of Hinduism, interwoven with elements of Buddhism, Cabala and traditional witchcraft. Both women stated quite candidly on several occasions that their writings were dictated to them by their spirit guides and that they were a comprehensive account of the Luciferian doctrines taught in Babylon and ancient Egypt. They come from Lucifer and are designed by him to beguile and mislead mankind. As an exquisitely crafted compendium of lies their only purpose is to lure the individual to destruction.

Despite its seemingly benevolent, non-threatening exterior, the New Age is extremely dangerous. It exerts a strong appeal to our fallen nature. Some New Age authors even boast openly that their god is Lucifer. Blavatsky gave the title 'Lucifer' to her newsletter. However, most New Agers are unaware of the profoundly Luciferian nature of their beliefs or the sinister agenda behind the well-planned New Age programme.

Again I would strongly suggest that you read my earlier paper, [Eighteen New Age Lies – An Occult Attack on Christianity](#), for a more detailed look at the New Age deception and the clever way its system of lies has been designed to undermine the Bible.

### **Deuteronomy Chapter 18**

Every Christian should be fully familiar with chapter 18 of the Book of Deuteronomy. In it the LORD warns in very stark terms against associating in any way with what we know today as the beliefs and practices of the New Age:

When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you. (Deuteronomy 18:9-14)

### **The New Age Movement and the Emerging Church Movement**

If you have any doubts about the insidious nature of the New Age and its ability to appeal in very subtle ways to our fallen nature, just look at the Emerging Church Movement. This is the broad umbrella of 'reform' which is currently under way in many supposedly Bible-believing churches today. Virtually all of the 'reforms' are disguised New Age beliefs. Just look at the following table:

	<b>Features of the Emerging Church</b>	<b>Related NEW AGE beliefs (per above list)</b>
1.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the judgment of God.	3, 10, 16 etc
2.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the need for repentance.	2, 10, 16 etc
3.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the fear of God.	3, 14, 20 etc
4.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the reality of hell and damnation.	1, 10, 11 etc
5.	A strong sympathy for universalism, namely that all (or most) souls will be saved.	2, 11, 18 etc
6.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the need for unconditional obedience to God.	3, 7, 27 etc
7.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the Bible as the complete, literal, infallible, unchanging word of God.	14, 33, 35 etc
8.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the Rapture, the Tribulation and the Millennium.	8, 11, 13 etc
9.	A widespread acceptance of evolution, usually in the guise of Intelligent Design.	4, 9, 18 etc
10.	A greatly reduced emphasis on the fact that Christ died <i>in our place</i> .	16, 34, 36 etc
11.	A greater emphasis on the humanity of Christ and less on his deity.	34, 35, 36 etc
12.	Far less emphasis on the need to be born again.	8, 11, 20 etc
13.	Strong emphasis on good works and social programs.	3, 7, 10 etc
14.	Strong emphasis on the doctrine that God is love.	3, 15, 20 etc
15.	Strong emphasis on the need to feel good about oneself.	1, 9, 10 etc
16.	A strong tendency to interpret scripture in accordance with one's experience.	5, 15, 33 etc
17.	A strong emphasis on contemplation and other 'techniques' to help one get closer to God.	5, 7, 8 etc

<b>18.</b>	A growing willingness to accept dreams as a reliable channel of divine communication	26, 28, 31 etc
<b>19.</b>	A rejection of the traditional Christian doctrine of separation.	9, 34, 36 etc
<b>20.</b>	A strong emphasis on ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue.	2, 34, 36 etc
<b>21.</b>	A strong emphasis on ‘tolerance’ and being non-judgmental.	10, 20, 36 etc
<b>22.</b>	A de facto willingness to accept divorce and homosexual behaviour and an increasingly ambivalent stance in relation to abortion.	22, 23, 24 etc
<b>23.</b>	A marked reluctance to condemn apostasy, or even to address it.	34, 35, 36 etc
<b>24.</b>	A marked reluctance to warn of demonic and occult influences in the world today.	4, 5, 26 etc
<b>25.</b>	A strong emphasis on human leadership, contemporary scholarship, and the opinions of men.	27, 33, 36 etc

As you can see the similarities between the New Age movement and the Emerging Church movement are both striking and disturbing.

Even Christians who are wary of the Emerging Church movement are being enticed into accepting three major ideas of the New Age, namely (1) that the vast majority of mankind will be saved, mainly through their good works, and that it is not necessary to know Christ to be saved, (2) that all religious traditions have some validity in the eyes of God, and (3) that our understanding of truth is evolving. These three beliefs are the basis for Universalism, Ecumenism and Modernism, respectively. All three are doing great harm to traditional born-again, Bible-believing Christianity and luring millions of professing Christians toward the broad way that Christ warned would lead to destruction:

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.  
(Matthew 7:13-14)

Given that it mirrors many aspects of the New Age movement, the Emerging Church is clearly ‘broad way’ in a strict Biblical sense. It preaches a cotton-wool gospel which cannot save anyone.

## **Satan is the Face behind the New Age Mask**

In closing I would like to draw attention to an excellent book – *Inside the New Age Nightmare* – by a former New Ager, Randall Baer, who came to Christ in a most dramatic way. Randall was very prominent in the New Age movement for many years and had co-authored two books on crystals which were very popular in the 1980s. He was in great demand on the New Age lecture circuit. Every New Ager should consider carefully his description of the way he came to Christ:

One night...my spirit was roaming some of the farthest reaches of “heavenly light” that I had ever perceived. That night I had an experience that would change my life forever.

During this experience I was surrounded by a virtually overwhelming luminosity – it was as if I was looking straight into the sun. Waves of bliss radiated through my spirit. I was totally captivated by the power.

Suddenly, another force stepped in. It took me by complete surprise. In the twinkling of an eye, it was like a supernatural hand had taken me behind the scenes of the experience that I was having. I was taken behind the outer covering of the dazzling luminosity and there saw something that left me literally shaking for a full week.

What I saw was the face of a devouring darkness! Behind the glittering outer facade of beauty lay a massively powerful, wildly churning face of absolute hatred and unspeakable abominations – the face of demons filled with the power of Satan.

For a moment that seemed like eternity, I realized that I was in major league trouble, for this devouring force was now closing in on me.

In absolute, stark terror I felt powerless to stop what appeared to be inevitable doom. Horror filled me like a consuming flame.

Then, miraculously, the same supernatural hand as before delivered me from the jaws of this consuming darkness, and hours later, I found myself waking up the next morning...the horror of the past night’s experience had left me terribly shaken. My mind was racing uncontrollably in all directions at what felt like the speed of light. My body was shaking involuntarily, sometimes rather violently. This nightmare continued without respite for a full week. I thought I was going stark raving mad...

What I didn’t know at the time was that it was JESUS who had intervened by His greater grace into my life. At this point, though, I only knew that some force greater than that of the devouring darkness had done two things: 1) it had shown me the real face of the New Age “heavens” and “angels” that I was so deeply involved with, and 2) it had delivered me from certain doom.

It took him a while to adjust to all of this and come to a full acceptance of the fact that Christ had intervened personally to save him from certain death at the hands of Satan. Along the way, he says, “I also had to sort out the shocking realization that the light that appeared so heavenly was really a counterfeit front for a devouring darkness.”

He went on to say that:

The more of the Bible I read, especially the Gospels, the more I saw that the teachings of Jesus plainly were at variance with New Age philosophy on many key points. A few of these issues included:

- The sinful nature of man (the New Age says that man is inherently perfect and a “god”)
- Man’s need for redemption through Jesus Christ (the New Age says there is no need for redemption)
- The final judgment (the New Age holds that each person is ultimately his own judge, and that the “lake of fire” is a myth)
- The personal and visible Second Coming of Jesus Christ (The New Age maintains that another “Christ” [not Jesus Christ] and/or “Christ consciousness” will lead the world into the New Age).

Randall went through a huge internal struggle for many weeks as Satan and his demons worked hard to retain their control over him. When he finally repented and accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and personal Saviour, he said “The Lord had cut through my horrific Satanic bondage and set me free as He received me into His Body as He washed my scarlet sins as white as snow. I was captive, but now I was free.” -

Looking back on my 15 long, intensive years in the New Age, it is clear how Satan tempted a naive, searching teenager, seduced a well-meaning, but blinded truth-seeker, and bound a man in chains with each step of a meteoric New Age career. The tragic poignancy of this entire scenario is that I truly believed through all this that the New Age did indeed hold ultimate truth and spiritual supremacy.

Not until I had a dramatic encounter with the devouring face of darkness behind all of the beautiful counterfeits did I *begin* to suspect that Satan is the author of the New Age. The saddest part of all is that millions and millions of New Agers today haven’t a clue to the fact that they are caught up in a masterful, powerful delusion that leads only to the lake of fire. Today, my heart still breaks when I think of all the people, young and old, who are flocking toward the false light of the New Age like moths to a flame.

### **A Personal Testimony**

I can strongly identify with what Randall went through since it closely parallels my own path to Christ. Here is how I described it a few months after I was saved from the claws of Satan:

I had...a ghastly encounter with Satan during my recent trip to [a New Age] seminar in Africa. A coven of witches, masquerading as ‘friends,’ opened the door to the dark force and directed it at me. The attack came during sleep. The demon itself was so evil, so incredibly vicious and wicked, that I cannot even begin to describe it. His hatred of me, and all humans, was astounding. And his power, wow! He raged viciously around me, trying to lure me out of my ‘safe place.’ He even sent in two lesser demons, who had no power in my safe place, to deceive me and lure me out. The raging provocation went on for some time. Not once did a Master of any kind appear to protect me. I was on my own. And yet someone did protect me, because I survived.

Afterwards I began to wake up to the full horror of what had happened. I began to realize who had protected me and put me in a safe place. It was Jesus. I know this for certain because my safe place was in the shape of communion bread. Even though I had abandoned Christianity 33 years before, he stepped in to protect a lost Soul. I had been lured into a Satanic ambush.

The coven of witches were amazed that I had survived. As far as they were concerned, I should have been either demonically possessed or stone dead.

This awful experience totally broke the spell cast by the New Age.

Even though I had yet to meet another born-again Christian, I came to Christ four weeks later. Through His grace and mercy I had been protected from a vicious Satanic attack and allowed to see the true face behind the New Age movement. Perhaps I will someday write in more detail about this experience and its aftermath. However, I would like the reader to note that I had been very active in the New Age for 33 years and had published two New Age books, with two others accepted for publication before I withdrew them. I had also lectured extensively about the New Age and been the guest speaker at national and international seminars on no fewer than fourteen occasions – in Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, England, Mexico, Ghana and the United States – and had spoken dozens of times at New Age seminars in the United States, Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. I was just as involved in the New Age as Randall was, and for twice as long.

### **Summary**

The whole of this paper can be summed up in just one sentence: The face behind the New Age movement is Satan, the entire New Age movement is a carefully designed Satanic deception, and the ONLY protection against Satan and his army of fallen angels is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lucifer is simply the ‘nice’ face that Satan presents to his followers. He is able to appear as a dazzling angel of light and to present himself as the glowing embodiment of truth. Many of his fallen angels have a similar ability. He is the master of deception and architect of a highly sophisticated, many-layered system of lies. No matter how good you may appear in your own eyes, in your fallenness you have absolutely no defense against these lies. Unless you have invited the LORD God of all creation, in the name of His only begotten son, Christ Jesus, to pour His saving grace into your heart, then you are lost.

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**Ireland**

**30 March 2011**



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\*These two books were written by influential leaders in the New Age movement. They state unashamedly and in great detail how the entire New Age philosophy was designed and what it is intended to achieve.

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**For more information visit: [www.zephaniah.eu](http://www.zephaniah.eu)**

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# **The Roman Catholic Church has taken a Sinister Step toward One World Government and a One World Religion**

**by Jeremy James**



Roman Catholic bishops with high-ranking members of the sadistic Ustashe regime at an official ceremony in Croatia, 1941

Vatican-watchers have known for some time that Rome is working to substantially enhance its grip over world events and establish a global dominion, whether outright or in partnership with other players in the intercontinental power game. Until now its aims and ambitions have been couched in vague terms and Vatican-speak. However, to the average Roman Catholic the social and political philosophy of the Vatican seems nothing more than a curious mixture of benevolent aspirations and woolly theology, with no tangible implications for the real world. By and large he does not see it as a major participant in the global power game or a potential threat to democracy and freedom. After all, who can dispute its constant reference to the need to promote the “common good” and a better world for all?

Many fine books deal with the true global ambitions of the Roman Catholic Church and, more specifically, the powerful elite who are using it for their own purposes. Some of them also highlight the patently Marxist principles which underpin its socio-economic agenda. For example, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania* (1999) by John Robbins is essential reading for any Roman Catholic who is truly concerned about the very disturbing direction that his church is taking.

## Background to World Domination

The Roman Catholic Church has long claimed the right to rule the world. For example, as early as 1493, Pope Alexander VI decreed that the world should be divided into two zones, one dominated by Catholic Spain and the other by Catholic Portugal. Millions of innocent people were murdered or enslaved on foot of this decree. Through the devious and deceitful machinations of the Jesuit Order the Roman Catholic Church has intrigued in countless ways to destabilize sovereign states and overthrow legitimate governments. The Jesuits organized the Counter-Reformation with a view to destroying all trace of true Biblical Christianity in Europe. This led to the Thirty Years War, in which Germany was torn apart and millions of innocent civilians murdered with great viciousness and cruelty.

Nevertheless, through providential intervention at crucial stages, Protestantism managed to survive and the war ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Though largely forgotten in our modern world, the Peace of Westphalia assumed a new significance with the publication on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011, of an official Vatican paper entitled *Towards Reforming the International Financial and Monetary Systems in the Context of Global Public Authority* (which we will discuss shortly) [A copy of the Vatican paper may be found in **Appendix A**].

By recognising the principle of independent sovereign states the Peace of Westphalia allowed Protestantism to continue unmolested in selected parts of Europe. There is no doubt Rome despised this outcome and has long sought to reverse it. To that extent, the Counter-Reformation has never ended and continues to this day, albeit in a heavily disguised form. The aim is still the same however, namely to destroy true Biblical Christianity and replace it in all corners of the world with the corrupt manmade version concocted by the elite group of families that have controlled Rome for generations.

## Papal Families

Over a period of 600 years or thereabouts, the Pope was selected from just 11 families – Orsini, Borgia, Piccolomini, De Medici, Colonna, Farnese, Caetani, Borghese, Barberini, Aldobrandi and Sforza. The first four held the papacy on no fewer than 9 occasions. The historian George L Williams has done some excellent work in establishing the overwhelming role that genealogy and dynastic succession has played in deciding the papacy. In *Papal Genealogy: The Families and Descendants of the Popes* (1997), he makes the following insightful observations [p.160]:

“The families of papal princes tended to intermarry with other titled papal families, and intermarriages between members of these families are still taking place in the twentieth century. While the popes during the Renaissance and Baroque periods advanced their families by officially presenting them with territories, titles and payments, their descendants often married into the old papal families as the Colonna, Orsini, Sforza-Conti-Cesarini (heirs of the Conti) and Caetani. But since the seventeenth century, the families of the Baroque popes (i.e. the Boncompagni, Ludovisi, Chigi, Albani, Altieri, Borghese, Aldobrandini, Ottoboni, Barberini, Pamphili, Rospigliosi, Odescalchi and Corsini) have been more inclined to intermarry with each other...”

Much the same system of patronage and nepotism operated in other powerful Italian city states. For example, Venice was one of the most influential political entities in the world for several centuries. However, the ruling class in that great city state comprised just a small group of families. Each family took a turn at the top – filling the life-long position of *Doge* – while continuing to ensure that most of the policies pursued were of benefit to the group as a whole. The success of this strategy is borne out by the longevity of this small state. In an age when formidable empires rose and fell, it survived and prospered from around 700 AD to 1798 AD, when it was finally overcome by Napoleon.

In the period 1190-1730, Venice had a total of 73 *Doges*, of which 36 came from just 9 families – Contarini, Mocenigo, Dandolo, Cornaro, Gradenigo, Priuli, Morosini, Donato and Venier. It was always in the interest of these leading families, as well as those with whom they intermarried, to support and defend the system. No one family dominated and yet the ruling elite kept everyone else in check. They could be ruthless in their treatment of outsiders, confident in the knowledge that the same methods would not be used against themselves. The city of Genoa used a similar system but it was less effective since a smaller number of families was allowed to dominate. For example in the period 1339-1527 the office of *Doge*, which changed 42 times, was secured on no fewer than 29 occasions by just 2 families, Adorno and Fregoso.

The Venetians also used another vital technique to consolidate their power – an extensive network of spies and informants. These were based in the courts of all the principal Italian cities, as well as other key cities across Europe. The intelligence gathered through this network enabled them to exploit commercial and military opportunities, to compromise their enemies, and through intrigue and disinformation to play one kingdom against another. The same system was adopted and applied by the Jesuit Order shortly after its foundation in 1540, and has undergone many refinements ever since.

### **Elite Families Rule**

Dynastic succession and planned inter-marriage among the elite over many centuries has ensured that Europe and America are controlled today by a very small group of people. Most of the one percent who own 40 percent of the wealth are in his category. They all share one thing in common – a deep-rooted hatred of Christianity. Not the phony variety taught by Rome – which continues to exercise a superstitious grip over hundreds of millions of innocent people – but the version founded solely on the Word of God. True Christians look only to the Living God, while false Christians invariably look elsewhere – to the Pope, the clergy, the Virgin, the saints, the sacraments, and the common good.

Rome has consistently worked toward the creation of a global empire. In that sense the Catholic Church is the primary vehicle through which this elite group of families has been advancing its cause. Through it they control and exploit the masses on all five continents and keep them from worshipping and praying to the Living and True God – the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They are also working behind the scenes, via the structures of the Roman Catholic Church and in other ways, to overthrow the system of sovereign states which was recognised by the Peace of Westphalia.

A great deal could be said here about their control over the international banking system, which is largely their own creation, and the system of secret societies which they and their allies have long used to influence and control independent states – the Jesuits, the Knights of Malta, the Freemasons, the Knights of Columbus/Columbanus, the Rosicrucians, the Theosophists, etc – but that is not the main focus of this paper. Please see my website ([www.zephaniah.eu](http://www.zephaniah.eu)) for more information about these aspects.

## **Papal Encyclicals and One World Government**

The political structure favoured by the Roman Catholic Church is fascism. Whenever it has been in the ascendant in any country it has tended in that direction – for example Spain under Franco, Italy under Mussolini, Portugal under Salazar, Croatia under Pavelic, Paraguay under Stroessner, Chile under Pinochet, Argentina under Videla, and the Philippines under Marcos. Many other examples could be given, where a powerful elite, endorsed unofficially by the Roman Catholic Church, employs military force to exercise complete control over a country and routinely abducts, tortures and murders anyone who dares to oppose it.

The mentality behind this is predicated on the belief that the end justifies the means, that the Church has the moral authority to govern without restrictions, and that any initial difficulties will be ironed out in due course as the population bows to the supreme will of a supposedly beneficent, centralised authority.

The same mentality has been evident in Vatican pronouncements for decades. For example, in the encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope Paul VI said:

...each man has therefore the right to find in the world what is necessary for himself. The recent Council [*Vatican II*] reminded us of this: “God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus, as all men follow justice and unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis.” All other rights whatsoever, including those of property and of free commerce, are to be subordinated to this principle.

Note the totalitarian maxim, “All other rights whatsoever...are to be subordinated to this principle.” Since these rights include freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, etc, the Vatican clearly sees a future, under its own control, where all men everywhere will be compelled to do as they are told, for the common good. The Vatican itself will decide what will count as ‘the common good’ and will prescribe suitable penalties for anyone who fails to comply.

Numerous other encyclicals over the past century have condemned what the Vatican describes as ‘individualism,’ ‘free competition,’ and ‘private property.’ For example, in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), Pope John Paul II stated that

Private property, in fact, is under a “social mortgage,” which means that it has an intrinsically social function, based upon and justified precisely by the principle of the universal destination of goods.

As far as the Vatican is concerned, private property has a moral justification only when it exists within a framework that guarantees the “universal destination of goods.” For “destination” read “distribution”, since that is how the “social mortgage” would work in practice. In short, if the central authority decides that certain goods are needed by another group, they will be redistributed accordingly for the greater good. The fact that these goods belong to someone else is immaterial. Their “social function” demands it. Thus the Vatican rejects the principle of private property.

This is indistinguishable from Marxism and, like Marxism, is predicated on the belief that, to work effectively, it must be implemented on a global basis. It also requires a strictly centralised system of economic management:

It pertains to the public authorities to choose, even to lay down the objectives to be pursued, the ends to be achieved, and the means for attaining these, and it is for them to stimulate all the forces engaged in this common activity. - Pope Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1967

Any reasonable person should find this prospect deeply disturbing. Furthermore we should be concerned that over a billion Roman Catholics seem largely oblivious to what their leaders are planning. Remember, if the Vatican has its way, their system of strict social control won't apply just to Roman Catholics but to all people everywhere, both “faithful and infidels”.

## **A Papal World Empire**

As we have already noted, the Papacy has long claimed to be the rightful ruler of the world. As early as 1250, Pope Innocent IV wrote that

the pope, who is vicar of Jesus Christ, has power not only over Christians but also over infidels, for Christ has power over all...All men, faithful and infidels, are Christ's sheep by creation...the pope has jurisdiction and power over all *de jure* though not *de facto*.

– from *The Crisis of Church and State, 1050-1300* by Brian Tierney, 1964

By working stealthily behind the scenes, the Vatican is now planning to transform this supposed jurisdiction and power over all men from a purely legal right into a global reality. Lest the reader be tempted to dismiss this as an antiquated ideal, here is how it was stated in the 1983 revision of the official *Canon Law of the Catholic Church*:

To the Church belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles, including those pertaining to the social order, and to make judgments on any human affairs to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls.

There is no doubt that many Roman Catholics, who are aware of the Vatican's global ambitions, regard them as acceptable, and perhaps even admirable. In their minds, the ultimate control of the world by the Roman Catholic Church would benefit all. In adopting this naive, albeit sincere, attitude, they overlook the church's long legacy of cruelty, torture, and murder, her ruthless persecution of her 'enemies' (namely anyone who disagreed with her), and the sadistic police state that she maintained for centuries across large parts of Europe under the banner of the Inquisition.

Somehow they imagine that the church has 'changed' and entered a state of benign enlightenment, committed wholly to preaching, peacemaking, and charitable work. They don't seem to recognize the major role that she has played in world events over the past hundred years, usually behind the scenes, installing and directing oppressive regimes and corrupt leaders on every continent. To the extent that they perceive the underlying trend, they imagine it to be a temporary phase, an unintended consequence of the church's high aspirations in the long term for all people. If the church ruled outright, without restriction, they reason, she would set the highest standards, a model that the rest of the world could admire and emulate.

Well, let's look at a recent example of a country that was ruled for a time by the Roman Catholic Church with virtually no outside interference and shielded throughout from the gaze of world opinion, namely Croatia in the period 1941-1944.

### **The Roman Catholic Slaughterhouse in Croatia**

The independent state of Croatia came into being on 10 April 1941 after the invasion of Yugoslavia by the Axis powers. It comprised not just the original territory of Croatia but the annexed territories of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Slovenia, as well as part of Serbia. The fledgling state was controlled under Nazi supervision by the fascist Ustashe movement, led by the notorious Ante Pavelic.

Pavelic was received by Pope Pius XII in a private audience in Rome on 18 May, 1941. Many historians regard this act as de facto recognition by the Holy See of the new Croatian state. As supreme dictator of Croatia, Pavelic enjoyed the unconditional support of his countrymen. Virtually without delay he set in motion a programme of ethnic cleansing, expulsion and enforced conversion to Catholicism of all Serbs living in the territory under his control. His goal was the creation of a purely Croatian, Roman Catholic state.

At the commencement of his programme, the territory as a whole included 3.3 million Roman Catholic Croats, 2.2 million Orthodox Serbs, a small population of Moslems, and about 45,000 Jews. By 1944, all of the Jews had been murdered by the Ustashe or despatched to Nazi death camps, while a vast number Serbs – men, women and children – were systematically slaughtered. The total number is disputed since reliable documentary evidence is not available, but informed estimates put it at somewhere between 600,000 and 900,000. A figure of 750,000 is commonly quoted.

In 1941, Fitzroy Maclean, who was Britain's military liaison with the anti-Ustashe partisans, wrote:

Bands of the Ustase roamed the countryside with knives, bludgeons, and machine guns, slaughtering Serbian men, women and little children, desecrating Serbian churches, murdering Serbian priests, laying waste Serbian villages, torturing, raping, burning, drowning. Killing became a cult, an obsession.

Details of what one commentator called “torture orgies” were often so gruesome, so utterly repellant, that they are unsuitable for inclusion in a paper of this kind.

When the Pope first received Pavelic in May, 1941, the Vatican already knew that he was a criminal and a psychopath. He had been convicted by a French court of the murder of Yugoslavian King Alexander and French Foreign Minister Barthou in 1934 and sentenced to death. However, after he escaped from the French authorities, Mussolini gave him asylum in Italy, largely out of deference to the Vatican. Then, using funding from both the Vatican and Mussolini, he built up the dreaded Ustashe. The Nazis themselves, who favoured the efficient dispatch of their victims, were unsettled by the sadism of the Ustashe who routinely tortured and mutilated their terrified victims, sometimes for hours, before finally slitting their throats. Despite the wave of genocidal butchery unleashed by Pavelic, the Pope refused to cut diplomatic ties with the Ustashe regime and even met Pavelic again in 1943.



Official reception of  
the Ustashe militia  
at the Vatican in  
September, 1943

The Catholic bishops of Croatia, headed by Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac, met in synod in November 1941 but refused to denounce the programme of enforced conversion of all Orthodox Serbs which had been in operation since the summer of that year. Neither did they denounce the systematic murder of all Serbs who refused to convert. By their official silence they gave their tacit approval to the atrocities that had taken place and to the ongoing programme of genocide which would result ultimately in the murder of around three-quarters of a million Serbian civilians. Most of Croatia’s Catholic clergy were fanatical supporters of Pavelic and his unbelievably sadistic regime. Virtually all of the bishops and senior clerics gave their oral endorsement to the state policy of enforced conversion, while many priests and monks actually took an active part, and sometimes a lead role, in the slaughter. Pavelic even awarded medals to priests and monks who did so.



About a dozen concentration camps were established by the Ustashe to facilitate their campaign of genocide. By far the largest was Jasenovac which, for a period of two years or so, was run by a psychopathic Franciscan monk named Miroslav Filipovic. There is no doubt that Jasenovac ranks alongside Dachau, Auschwitz and Treblinka as one of the most appalling monuments in history to human depravity and sadism. However, most people today have not even heard of Jasenovac, mainly because Vatican pressure to suppress knowledge of its existence has been largely successful.

The Catholic Church simply does not want the world to know what it did in Croatia during the period 1941-1944. For example, when a respected Irish historian, Hubert Butler, tried during the 1960s to draw attention to the prominent role played by the Catholic clergy and the Vatican in the Croatian genocide, he was publicly vilified by the Irish Catholic hierarchy and denounced as a liar.

### **The Vatican was well aware of developments in Croatia**

The Vatican actively promoted Croatian nationalism, gave de facto recognition to an independent Croatia, endorsed Pavelic and his regime, and approved the Croatian interpretation of Balkan history. A senior official in the Vatican's Secretariat of State, Giovanni Montini, kept track of developments in Croatia and reported daily to the Pope. It is a mark of the importance attaching to this activity that the Pope had assigned it to rising-star Montini – who later became Pope Paul VI. With so many Catholic clergy in Croatia there is no doubt that Montini knew exactly what was happening on the ground. According to the English historian, John Cornwell, Pius XII was better informed of the situation in Croatia than he was about any other area in Europe (outside Italy). His apostolic legate, Ramiro Marcone, came and went between Zagreb and Rome at will. In addition, the Croatian bishops, some of whom sat in the Croatian parliament, communicated freely with the Vatican and continued to make regular visits to the Pope in Rome.



Ustashe soldiers pose with evident pride over the corpses of their victims.

After the war the Pope gave refuge to Pavelic in Rome and even enabled him to escape via the Vatican ratline to South America. He also elevated Stepinac to the rank of Cardinal in 1952, even though he had been convicted in a court of law of complicity in serious war crimes. Incredibly, he was beatified by another pope – John Paul II – in 1998. Thus a man who played a role in the torture and slaughter of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children is considered 'saintly' by the Vatican.

In his analysis of the action taken by Pope Pius XII during this period, Cornwell summarised the horror as follows:

An act of “ethnic cleansing” before that hideous term came into vogue, it was an attempt to create a “pure” Catholic Croatia by enforced conversion, deportations, and mass extermination. So dreadful were the acts of torture and murder that even hardened German troops registered their horror. Even by comparison with the recent bloodshed in Yugoslavia [during the 1990s] ... Pavelic’s onslaught against the Orthodox Serbs remains one of the most appalling civilian massacres known to history.

The situation in Croatia in the period 1941 to 1944 was an open partnership between church and state, the kind of relationship most favoured by the Catholic Church in its long and bloody history. Former BBC commentator Avro Manhattan, who was an expert on Vatican politics, captured perfectly the chilling reality behind this when he wrote:

The uniqueness of the Independent Catholic State of Croatia lies precisely in this: that it provided a model, in miniature, of what the Catholic Church, had she the power, would like to see in the West and, indeed, everywhere. (*The Vatican’s Holocaust*, 1986)

### **Rome’s longstanding contempt for true Christianity**

If you find it difficult to understand how the Roman Catholic clergy in Croatia could participate in a programme of genocidal sadism or how their contempt for Orthodox Serbs could be so intense that they would experience no moral revulsion when carrying out acts of the utmost barbarity, then please consider the document set out in **Appendix B**. It details the confession which the Jesuits required all Hungarian converts from Protestantism to make in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The same dark spirit which informed that wretched document was behind the mass sadism seen in Croatia, and is alive today at the heart of the Catholic Church.



### **The Pit of Death**

An Orthodox Serb being thrown alive into a mass grave in the notorious Jasenovac concentration camp in 1942.

## **The Latest Vatican Blueprint for Global Control**

We will now examine the latest strategic policy document released by a leading Vatican think-tank in which the global ambitions of the Roman Catholic Church are well and truly evident. As we examine it, please bear in mind that its low-key, bureaucratic language conceals a full-blown fascist agenda. We won't find any of the bluster and vitriol of *Mein Kampf* but, rather, the calm and measured jargon of an academic document mixed here and there throughout with altruistic platitudes.

Firstly, the paper sets out its broad philosophy using fairly innocuous terms, for example:

“...to shape a new vision for the future...”

“...an efficient allocation of available resources...”

“...embracing the logic of the global common good...”

“...a new humanism open to transcendence...”

Despite their nebulous nature, these phrases are loaded with significance. For example, the Bible already sets out a vision for the future, so why is the Vatican advocating a new one? The efficient allocation of available resources, which the paper also highlights, is a key concern of Marxism. Note, in particular, the phrase, “a new humanism”. This is a remarkable term for a so-called Christian document to employ since “humanism” is a patently anti-Christian philosophy. The three *Humanist Manifestos* of 1933, 1973 and 2003 are virulently atheistic in both tone and content and utterly opposed to the application of Biblical values in any walk of life.

## **One World Government**

Our next excerpt confirms that the Vatican has long sought the creation of a world political authority or one-world government:

“In the prophetic *Encyclical Pacem in Terris* of 1963, he [Pope John XXIII] observed that the world was heading towards ever greater unification. He then acknowledged the fact that a correspondence was lacking in the human community between the political organization “on a world level and the objective needs of the universal common good”. He also expressed the hope that one day “a true world political authority” would be created.”

This envisages and welcomes greater world unification, where independent states will cede their sovereignty to a central authority. Marxism has exactly the same goal. Once implemented, all local, regional and national autonomy will have disappeared and the seven billion human inhabitants of this planet will be under the complete control of an all-powerful central authority.

Such an authority would be no more ‘democratic’ than the EU or the UN, both of which are controlled from the wings by the ultra-wealthy elite who run this world, albeit with much mutual rivalry and internal dissension. These institutions continue to have a veneer of democracy since prevailing global conditions require that such a pretence be maintained for the time being, but a “true world political authority” could dispense with any semblance of democracy. The Roman Catholic Church has never been democratic in any manner or form, so the emergence of an anti-democratic, all-powerful global authority would be fully consistent with its political philosophy.

The paper then makes the following comment:

“So the world Authority should consistently involve all peoples in a collaboration in which they are called to contribute, bringing to it the heritage of their virtues and their civilizations.”

The proposed “collaboration” of “all peoples” during the creation of this utopian world government is designed to convey the impression that it will come about only through the operation of democratic principles and informed consent. That this will not happen in practice is made very clear by the subsequent steps in the Vatican’s strategy. For example, it goes on to say that

“The establishment of a global political Authority cannot be achieved without an already functioning multilateralism, not only on a diplomatic level, but also and above all in relation to programs for sustainable development and peace. It is not possible to arrive at global Government without giving political expression to pre-existing forms of interdependence and cooperation.”

Only by fostering ever greater interdependence between national and international institutions, as well as the promotion of elaborate pan-national programmes which bypass local controls, can the proposed new world-encircling entity be brought into being. In other words, it will be imposed incrementally by gradually enlarging existing international institutions and programmes. Since none of these have been developed on a democratic basis, but have been created and shaped by the dictates of powerful vested interests, the emerging world government system will be brought about in much the same way. Whatever public consultation is undertaken will be purely cosmetic. So, whether or not seven billion people withhold their consent or voice their objections will be utterly irrelevant. They will gradually lose whatever autonomy and independence they currently enjoy and will be obliged to submit to an all-powerful global authority.

Given the way dictatorial regimes have operated in the past, the path to world government will likely be greatly foreshortened by the deliberate engineering of global or international crises, such as a collapse of the world financial system and a major war in the Middle East, in order to soften popular resistance and convince the masses that the ‘old’ system is no longer workable.

As part of this process, the Vatican paper envisages a “commitment to create some form of global monetary management.” This same goal is also being pursued by the ultra-rich elite who control the international banking system. By bringing the existing system to the brink of destruction and wiping out the wealth of the middle classes in both Europe and America, they plan to secure wide popular support for a ‘better’ system. This better system, an international currency controlled by a world central bank, corresponds to what the Vatican calls “some form of global monetary management.” What the global elite call a world central bank, the Vatican paper calls “a public Authority with universal jurisdiction.” It also envisages the suppression of independent national currencies and their replacement by a global currency:

“It is obvious that to some extent this is equivalent to putting the existing exchange systems up for discussion in order to find effective means of coordination and supervision.”

### **The Planned Dissolution of Nation States**

Next, in the cause of “universal brotherhood” and “universal common good” – terms which figure prominently in the social agenda pursued by Humanists, Marxists and Freemasons – the Vatican paper proceeds to attack the nation state:

Modern States became structured wholes over time and reinforced sovereignty within their own territory. But social, cultural and political conditions have gradually changed. Their interdependence has grown – so it has become natural to think of an international community that is integrated and increasingly ruled by a shared system – but a worse form of nationalism has lingered on, according to which the State feels it can achieve the good of its own citizens in a self-sufficient way.

Nationalism has “lingered on” and its continued existence in our modern world “seems anachronistic and surreal” (see text in Appendix A). In other words, unless we get rid of nation states and create a unified global political entity, governed by a supreme ruling authority, the only alternative is perpetual war, “a never-ending struggle.”

This kind of reasoning is utterly absurd and flatly contradicts the plain facts of history. Consider, for example, the countless wars fought between predominantly Catholic countries! Or the appalling carnage caused by the church of Rome during the Thirty Years War in order to keep Germany under her control. When it comes to having her own way, the Roman Catholic Church has never been slow to resort to war, terror, torture, and murder on a horrifying scale. Moreover, the existence of large sovereign entities has never been a guarantee of peace within their borders. Look, for example, at the countless millions of Chinese murdered by Mao or the millions of Soviet citizens starved to death or murdered by Stalin.

The paper also argues that, “now that vital goods shared by the entire human family are at stake, goods which the individual [nation] States cannot promote and protect by themselves”, overall control and corresponding powers should be handed to “institutions with universal competence”. Again, this is bogus reasoning of the most devious kind. There are no “vital goods” needed by the “human family” which individual nation states cannot provide for their citizens, whether through indigenous enterprise or international trade.

The authors dismiss the existing system of sovereign states as ‘Westphalian’, an obvious reference to Peace of Westphalia, 1648, in which the Catholic Church had to resign herself to the existence of a number sovereign European states outside her control. She now wants to “seize the opportunity to integrate their respective sovereignties for the common good of peoples”, to overturn the principles underpinned by the Peace of Westphalia and bring all nations under the control of a global political entity.

If an international regime of this kind ever came into being, it would be indistinguishable from fascist regimes of the past. There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church, through her astonishing wealth and weight of numbers, would expect to be a leading member, if not outright leader, of the elite cabal that exercised ultimate control. Under such circumstances non-Catholics the world over could expect at some stage to be offered the ‘Croatian’ option, convert or die.

### **Anguish and Suffering**

The paper then proceeds to endorse a very disturbing proposition, namely that the changes envisaged – creation of a one-world government from the remains of nation states – “will not come about without anguish and suffering.” Incredibly, the authors recognise that, even with extensive coercion and intimidation, imposed economic stress and international intrigue, the outcome they seek must necessarily be preceded by a period of widespread violence and strife!

Having made this alarming disclosure, they say no more in the matter. It is obvious from the magnitude of what they are proposing that the “anguish and suffering” which they believe is inevitable must involve death on a large scale. It says a lot about the mentality of its authors that an implication of such seriousness can be glossed over in a major strategic paper as though it were a mere detail.

### **The Vatican’s Gross Distortion of Scripture**

Perhaps the most unsettling part of the Vatican paper is its gross distortion of the Bible itself, in particular verses 1-9 of Genesis 11. Here is what it says:

“Through the account of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), the Bible warns us how the “diversity” of peoples can turn into a vehicle for selfishness and an instrument of division. In humanity there is a real risk that peoples will end up not understanding each other and that cultural diversities will lead to irremediable oppositions. The image of the Tower of Babel also warns us that we must avoid a “unity” that is only apparent, where selfishness and divisions endure because the foundations of the society are not stable. In both cases, Babel is the image of what peoples and individuals can become when they do not recognize their intrinsic transcendent dignity and brotherhood.

“The spirit of Babel is the antithesis of the Spirit of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12), of God’s design for the whole of humanity: that is, unity in truth. Only a spirit of concord that rises above divisions and conflicts will allow humanity to be authentically one family and to conceive of a new world with the creation of a world public Authority at the service of the common good.”

Anyone who knows the Bible from a truly scriptural perspective will know that the Genesis account of Babel is very different from the twisted interpretation given here by the authors of the Vatican paper. Yes, God condemned the attempt by Nimrod and his cronies to create a centralised world government. But He did not do so because they had failed to go about it in the right way. Rather He condemned it because it *was* a world government, a centralised system of control to which all people of the time would be subject. Through the account in Genesis God is telling us that world government itself is evil and will not be tolerated by Him.

It is difficult to believe, when the authors of the Vatican paper finally try to present some kind of scriptural support for their position, that they should make such an outrageous mess of it. Even a fledgling Bible scholar from a born-again Christian background would know that the account of Babel in Genesis is an expression of God’s total revulsion at Nimrod’s attempt to create a system of global governance!

Incredibly, the Vatican authors display even greater ignorance of the Bible, the Word of God, when they try to imply that the original attempt failed because the participants did not understand each other and that the resulting “cultural diversities” led to internal conflicts. This is complete and utter nonsense! The LORD cursed mankind with a multiplicity of languages in order to thwart any attempt by an elite power group to create a one-world government.

The book of Genesis makes it abundantly clear that God HATES world government.

There is no doubt that what the Vatican paper proposes is evil, that the programme of world government which it is planning is Satanic in nature, and that it will lead to the series of catastrophic events described in the Book of Revelation.

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**Jeremy James**  
**Ireland**  
**10 November 2011**

## APPENDIX A

### Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace\*

#### TOWARDS REFORMING THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND MONETARY SYSTEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL PUBLIC AUTHORITY

Vatican City  
2011

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#### Preface

“The world situation requires the concerted effort of everyone, a thorough examination of every facet of the problem – social, economic, cultural and spiritual. The Church, which has long experience in human affairs and has no desire to be involved in the political activities of any nation, ‘seeks but one goal: to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth; to save, not to judge; to serve, not to be served.’”

With these words, in the prophetic and always relevant Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* of 1967, Paul VI outlined in a clear way “the trajectories” of the Church’s close relation with the world. These trajectories intersect in the profound value of human dignity and the quest for the common good, which make people responsible and free to act according to their highest aspirations.

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**\*Full Text: Note on financial reform from the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.** 2011-10-24 Vatican Radio. Please find, below, an unofficial translation of the Note on the reform of the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global public authority, released Monday [October 24<sup>th</sup> 2011] by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.



The economic and financial crisis which the world is going through calls everyone, individuals and peoples, to examine in depth the principles and the cultural and moral values at the basis of social coexistence. What is more, the crisis engages private actors and competent public authorities on the national, regional and international level in serious reflection on both causes and solutions of a political, economic and technical nature.

In this perspective, as Benedict XVI teaches, the crisis “obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules and to discover new forms of commitment, to build on positive experiences and to reject negative ones. The crisis thus becomes an opportunity for discernment, in which to shape a new vision for the future. In this spirit, with confidence rather than resignation, it is appropriate to address the difficulties of the present time.”

The G20 leaders themselves said in the Statement they adopted in Pittsburgh in 2009: “The economic crisis demonstrates the importance of ushering in a new era of sustainable global economic activity grounded in responsibility.”

The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace now responds to the Holy Father’s appeal, while making the concerns of everyone our own, especially the concerns of those who pay most dearly for the current situation. With due respect for the competent civil and political authorities, the Council hereby offers and shares its reflection: Towards reforming the international financial and monetary systems in the context of global public authority.

This reflection hopes to benefit world leaders and all people of good will. It is an exercise of responsibility not only towards the current but above all towards future generations, so that hope for a better future and confidence in human dignity and capacity for good may never be extinguished.

- Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson and Mario Toso

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## **President Secretary**

### **Presupposition**

Every individual and every community shares in and is responsible for promoting the common good. Faithful to their ethical and religious vocation, communities of believers should take the lead in asking whether human family has adequate means at its disposal to achieve the global common good. The Church for her part is called to encourage in everyone without distinction, the desire to join in the “monumental amount of individual and collective effort” which men have made “throughout the course of the centuries ... to better the circumstances of their lives.... [T]his human activity accords with God’s will.”

## **1. Economic Development and Inequalities**

The grave economic and financial crisis which the world is going through today springs from multiple causes. Opinions on the number and significance of these causes vary widely. Some commentators emphasize first and foremost certain errors inherent in the economic and financial policies; others stress the structural weaknesses of political, economic and financial institutions; still others say that the causes are ethical breakdowns occurring at all levels of a world economy that is increasingly dominated by utilitarianism and materialism. At every stage of the crisis, one might discover particular technical errors intertwined with certain ethical orientations.

In material goods markets, natural factors and productive capacity as well as labour in all of its many forms set quantitative limits by determining relationships of costs and prices which, under certain conditions, permit an efficient allocation of available resources.

In monetary and financial markets, however, the dynamics are quite different. In recent decades, it was the banks that extended credit, which generated money, which in turn sought a further expansion of credit. In this way, the economic system was driven towards an inflationary spiral that inevitably encountered a limit in the risk that credit institutions could accept. They faced the ultimate danger of bankruptcy, with negative consequences for the entire economic and financial system.

After World War II, national economies made progress, albeit with enormous sacrifices for millions, indeed billions of people who, as producers and entrepreneurs on the one hand and as savers and consumers on the other, had put their confidence in a regular and progressive expansion of money supply and investment in line with opportunities for real growth of the economy.

Since the 1990s, we have seen that money and credit instruments worldwide have grown more rapidly than revenue, even adjusting for current prices. From this came the formation of pockets of excessive liquidity and speculative bubbles which later turned into a series of solvency and confidence crises that have spread and followed one another over the years.

A first crisis took place in the 1970s until the early 1980s and was related to the sudden sharp rises in oil prices. Subsequently, there was a series of crises in the developing world, for example, the first crisis in Mexico in the 1980s and those in Brazil, Russia and Korea, and then again in Mexico in the 1990s as well as in Thailand and Argentina.

The speculative bubble in real estate and the recent financial crisis have the very same origin in the excessive amount of money and the plethora of financial instruments globally.

Whereas the crises in the developing countries that risked involving the global monetary and financial system were contained through interventions by the more developed countries, the outbreak of the crisis in 2008 was characterized by a different factor compared with the previous ones, something decisive and explosive. Generated in the context of the United States, it took place in one of the most important zones for the global economy and finances. It directly affected what is still the currency of reference for the great majority of international trade transactions.

A liberalist approach, unsympathetic towards public intervention in the markets, chose to allow an important international financial institution to fall into bankruptcy, on the assumption that this would contain the crisis and its effects. Unfortunately, this spawned a widespread lack of confidence and a sudden change in attitudes. Various public interventions of enormous scope (more than 20% of gross national product) were urgently requested in order to stem the negative effects that could have overwhelmed the entire international financial system.

The consequences for the real economy, what with grave difficulties in some sectors – first of all, construction – and wide distribution of unfavourable forecasts, have generated a negative trend in production and international trade with very serious repercussions for employment as well as other effects that have probably not yet had their full impact. The costs are extremely onerous for millions in the developed countries, but also and above all for billions in the developing ones.

In countries and areas where the most elementary goods like health, food and shelter are still lacking, more than a billion people are forced to survive on an average income of less than a dollar a day.

Global economic well-being, traditionally measured by national income and also by levels of capacities, grew during the second half of the twentieth century, to an extent and with a speed never experienced in the history of humankind.

But the inequalities within and between various countries have also grown significantly. While some of the more industrialized and developed countries and economic zones – the ones that are most industrialized and developed – have seen their income grow considerably, other countries have in fact been excluded from the overall improvement of the economy and their situation has even worsened.

After the Second Vatican Council in his Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* of 1967, Paul VI already clearly and prophetically denounced the dangers of an economic development conceived in liberalist terms because of its harmful consequences for world equilibrium and peace. The Pontiff asserted that the defence of life and the promotion of people's cultural and moral development are the essential conditions for the promotion of authentic development. On these grounds, Paul VI said that full and global development is "the new name of peace".

Forty years later, in its annual Report of in 2007, the International Monetary Fund recognized the close connection between an inadequately managed process of globalization on the one hand, and the world's great inequalities on the other. Today the modern means of communication make these great economic, social and cultural inequalities obvious to everyone, rich and poor alike, giving rise to tensions and to massive migratory movements.

Nonetheless, it should be reiterated that the process of globalisation with its positive aspects is at the root of the world economy's great development in the twentieth century. It is worth recalling that between 1900 and 2000 the world population increased almost fourfold and the wealth produced worldwide grew much more rapidly, resulting in a significant rise of average per capita income. At the same time, however, the distribution of wealth did not become fairer but in many cases worsened. What has driven the world in such a problematic direction for its economy and also for peace?

First and foremost, an economic liberalism that spurns rules and controls. Economic liberalism is a theoretical system of thought, a form of “economic apriorism” that purports to derive laws for how markets function from theory, these being laws of capitalistic development, while exaggerating certain aspects of markets. An economic system of thought that sets down a priori the laws of market functioning and economic development, without measuring them against reality, runs the risk of becoming an instrument subordinated to the interests of the countries that effectively enjoy a position of economic and financial advantage.

Regulations and controls, imperfect though they may be, already often exist at the national and regional levels; whereas on the international level, it is hard to apply and consolidate such controls and rules.

The inequalities and distortions of capitalist development are often an expression not only of economic liberalism but also of utilitarian thinking: that is, theoretical and practical approaches according to which what is useful for the individual leads to the good of the community. This saying has a core of truth, but it cannot be ignored that individual utility – even where it is legitimate – does not always favour the common good. In many cases a spirit of solidarity is called for that transcends personal utility for the good of the community.

In the 1920s, some economists had already warned about giving too much weight, in the absence of regulations and controls, to theories which have since become prevailing ideologies and practices on the international level.

One devastating effect of these ideologies, especially in the last decades of the past century and the first years of the current one, has been the outbreak of the crisis in which the world is still immersed.

In his social encyclical, Benedict XVI precisely identified the roots of a crisis that is not only economic and financial but above all moral in nature. In fact, as the Pontiff notes, to function correctly the economy needs ethics; and not just of any kind but one that is people-centred. He goes on to denounce the role played by utilitarianism and individualism and the responsibilities of those who have adopted and promoted them as the parameters for the optimal behaviour of all economic and political agents who operate and interact in the social context. But Benedict XVI also identifies and denounces a new ideology, that of “technocracy”.

## **2. The Role of Technology and the Ethical Challenge**

The great economic and social development of the past century, with their bright spots and serious shadows, can also be attributed in large part to the continued development of technology and more recently to advances in information technologies and especially their applications in the economy and most significantly in finance.

However, to interpret the current new social question lucidly, we must avoid the error – itself a product of neo-liberal thinking – that would consider all the problems that need tackling to be exclusively of a technical nature. In such a guise, they evade the needed discernment and ethical evaluation. In this context Benedict XVI's encyclical warns about the dangers of the technocracy ideology: that is, of making technology absolute, which “tends to prevent people from recognizing anything that cannot be

explained in terms of matter alone” and minimizing the value of the choices made by the concrete human individual who works in the economic-financial system by reducing them to mere technical variables. Being closed to a “beyond” in the sense of something more than technology, not only makes it impossible to find adequate solutions to the problems, but it impoverishes the principal victims of the crisis more and more from the material standpoint.

In the context of the complexity of the phenomena, the importance of the ethical and cultural factors cannot be overlooked or underestimated. In fact, the crisis has revealed behaviours like selfishness, collective greed and the hoarding of goods on a great scale. No one can be content with seeing man live like “a wolf to his fellow man”, according to the concept expounded by Hobbes. No one can in conscience accept the development of some countries to the detriment of others. If no solutions are found to the various forms of injustice, the negative effects that will follow on the social, political and economic level will be destined to create a climate of growing hostility and even violence, and ultimately undermine the very foundations of democratic institutions, even the ones considered most solid.

Recognizing the primacy of being over having and of ethics over the economy, the world’s peoples ought to adopt an ethic of solidarity as the animating core of their action. This implies abandoning all forms of petty selfishness and embracing the logic of the global common good which transcends merely contingent, particular interests. In a word, they ought to have a keen sense of belonging to the human family which means sharing the common dignity of all human beings: “Even prior to the logic of a fair exchange of goods and the forms of justice appropriate to it, there exists something which is due to man because he is man, by reason of his lofty dignity.”

In 1991, after the failure of Marxist communism, Blessed John Paul II had already warned of the risk of an “idolatry of the market, an idolatry which ignores the existence of goods which by their nature are not and cannot be mere commodities.” Today his warning needs to be heeded without delay and a road must be taken that is in greater harmony with the dignity and transcendent vocation of the person and the human family.

### **3. An Authority over Globalization**

On the way to building a more fraternal and just human family and, even before that, a new humanism open to transcendence, Blessed John XXIII’s teaching seems especially timely. In the prophetic Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* of 1963, he observed that the world was heading towards ever greater unification. He then acknowledged the fact that a correspondence was lacking in the human community between the political organization “on a world level and the objective needs of the universal common good”. He also expressed the hope that one day “a true world political authority” would be created.

In view of the unification of the world engendered by the complex phenomenon of globalization, and of the importance of guaranteeing, in addition to other collective goods, the good of a free, stable world economic and financial system at the service of the real economy, today the teaching of *Pacem in Terris* appears to be even more vital and worthy of urgent implementation.

In the same spirit of *Pacem in Terris*, Benedict XVI himself expressed the need to create a world political authority. This seems obvious if we consider the fact that the agenda of questions to be dealt with globally is becoming ever longer. Think, for example, of peace and security; disarmament and arms control; promotion and protection of fundamental human rights; management of the economy and development policies; management of the migratory flows and food security, and protection of the environment. In all these areas, the growing interdependence between States and regions of the world becomes more and more obvious as well as the need for answers that are not just sectorial and isolated, but systematic and integrated, rich in solidarity and subsidiarity and geared to the universal common good.

As the Pope reminds us, if this road is not followed, “despite the great progress accomplished in various sectors, international law would risk being conditioned by the balance of power among the strongest nations.”

The purpose of the public authority, as John XXIII recalled in *Pacem in Terris*, is first and foremost to serve the common good. Therefore, it should be endowed with structures and adequate, effective mechanisms equal to its mission and the expectations placed in it. This is especially true in a globalized world which makes individuals and peoples increasingly interconnected and interdependent, but which also reveals the existence of monetary and financial markets of a predominantly speculative sort that are harmful for the real economy, especially of the weaker countries.

This is a complex and delicate process. A supranational Authority of this kind should have a realistic structure and be set up gradually. It should be favourable to the existence of efficient and effective monetary and financial systems; that is, free and stable markets overseen by a suitable legal framework, well-functioning in support of sustainable development and social progress of all, and inspired by the values of charity and truth. It is a matter of an Authority with a global reach that cannot be imposed by force, coercion or violence, but should be the outcome of a free and shared agreement and a reflection of the permanent and historic needs of the world common good. It ought to arise from a process of progressive maturation of consciences and freedoms as well as the awareness of growing responsibilities. Consequently, reciprocal trust, autonomy and participation cannot be overlooked as if they were superfluous elements. The consent should involve an ever greater number of countries that adhere with conviction, through a sincere dialogue that values the minority opinions rather than marginalizing them. So the world Authority should consistently involve all peoples in a collaboration in which they are called to contribute, bringing to it the heritage of their virtues and their civilizations.

The establishment of a world political Authority should be preceded by a preliminary phase of consultation from which a legitimated institution will emerge that is in a position to be an effective guide and, at the same time, can allow each country to express and pursue its own particular good. The exercise of this Authority at the service of the good of each and every one will necessarily be *super partes* (impartial): that is, above any partial vision or particular good, in view of achieving the common good. Its decisions should not be the result of the more developed countries' excessive power over the weaker countries. Instead, they should be made in the interest of all, not only to the advantage of some groups, whether they are formed by private lobbies or national governments.

A supranational Institution, the expression of a “community of nations”, will not last long, however, if the countries’ diversities from the standpoint of cultures, material and immaterial resources and historic and geographic conditions, are not recognized and fully respected. The lack of a convinced consensus, nourished by an unceasing moral communion on the part of the world community, would also reduce the effectiveness of such an Authority.

What is valid on the national level is also valid on the global level. A person is not made to serve authority unconditionally. Rather, it is the task of authority to be at the service of the person, consistent with the pre-eminent value of human dignity. Likewise, governments should not serve the world Authority unconditionally. Instead, it is the world Authority that should put itself at the service of the various member countries, according to the principle of subsidiarity. Among the ways it should do this is by creating the socio-economic, political and legal conditions essential for the existence of markets that are efficient and efficacious because they are not over-protected by paternalistic national policies and not weakened by systematic deficits in public finances and of the gross national products – indeed, such policies and deficits actually hamper the markets themselves in operating in a world context as open and competitive institutions.

In the tradition of the Church’s Magisterium which Benedict XVI has vigorously embraced, the principle of subsidiarity should regulate relations between the State and local communities and between public and private institutions, not excluding the monetary and financial institutions. So, on a higher level, it ought to govern the relations between a possible future global public Authority and regional and national institutions. This principle guarantees both democratic legitimacy and the efficacy of the decisions of those called to make them. It allows respect for the freedom of people, individually and in communities, and at the same time, allows them to take responsibility for the objectives and duties that pertain to them.

According to the logic of subsidiarity, the higher Authority offers its subsidium, that is, its aid, only when individual, social or financial actors are intrinsically deficient in capacity, or cannot manage by themselves to do what is required of them. Thanks to the principle of solidarity, a lasting and fruitful relation is built up between global civil society and a world public Authority as States, intermediate bodies, various institutions – including economic and financial ones – and citizens make their decisions with a view to the global common good, which transcends national goods. As we read in *Caritas in Veritate*, “The governance of globalization must be marked by subsidiarity, articulated into several layers and involving different levels that can work together.” Only in this way can the danger of a central Authority’s bureaucratic

isolation be avoided, which would otherwise risk being delegitimized by an excessive distance from the realities on which it is based and easily fall prey to paternalistic, technocratic or hegemonic temptations.

However, a long road still needs to be travelled before arriving at the creation of a public Authority with universal jurisdiction. It would seem logical for the reform process to proceed with the United Nations as its reference because of the worldwide scope of its responsibilities, its ability to bring together the nations of the world, and the diversity of its tasks and those of its specialized Agencies. The fruit of such reforms ought to be a greater ability to adopt policies and choices that are binding because they are aimed at achieving the common good on the local, regional and world levels. Among the policies, those regarding global social justice seem most urgent: financial and monetary policies that will not damage the weakest countries; and policies aimed at achieving free and stable markets and a fair distribution of world wealth, which may also derive from unprecedented forms of global fiscal solidarity, which will be dealt with later. On the way to creating a world political Authority, questions of governance (that is, a system of merely horizontal coordination without an authority super partes cannot be separated from those of a shared government (that is, a system which in addition to horizontal coordination establishes an authority super partes) which is functional and proportionate to the gradual development of a global political society. The establishment of a global political Authority cannot be achieved without an already functioning multilateralism, not only on a diplomatic level, but also and above all in relation to programs for sustainable development and peace. It is not possible to arrive at global Government without giving political expression to pre-existing forms of interdependence and cooperation.

#### **4. Towards Reforming the International Financial and Monetary Systems in a way that Responds to the Needs of all Peoples**

In economic and financial matters, the most significant difficulties come from the lack of an effective set of structures that can guarantee, in addition to a system of governance, a system of government for the economy and international finance. What can be said about this prospect? What steps can be taken concretely?

With regard to the current global economic and financial systems, two decisive factors should be stressed. The first is the gradual decline in efficacy of the Bretton Woods institutions beginning in the early 1970s. In particular, the International Monetary Fund has lost an essential element for stabilizing world finance, that of regulating the overall money supply and vigilance over the amount of credit risk taken on by the system. To sum it up, stabilizing the world monetary system is no longer a “universal public good” within its reach. The second factor is the need for a minimum, shared body of rules to manage the global financial market which has grown much more rapidly than the real economy. This situation of rapid, uneven growth has come about, on the one hand, because of the overall abrogation of controls on capital movements and the tendency to deregulate banking and financial activities; and on the other, because of advances in financial technology, due largely to information technology.



On the structural level, in the latter part of the last century, monetary and financial activities worldwide grew much more rapidly than the production of goods and services. In this context, the quality of credit tended to decrease to the point that it exposed the credit institutions to more risk than was reasonably sustainable. It is sufficient to look at the fate of large and small credit institutions during the crises that broke out in the 1980s and 1990s, and finally in the 2008 crisis.

Again in the last part of the twentieth century, there was a growing tendency to define the strategic directions of economic and financial policy in terms of ‘clubs’ and of larger or smaller groups of more developed countries. While not denying the positive aspects of this approach, it is impossible to overlook that it did not appear to respect the representative principle fully, in particular of the less developed or emerging countries. The need to heed the voices of a greater number of countries has led to expanding the relevant groups; for instance, there is now a G20 where there was once just a G7. This has been a positive development because it became possible to include developing and emerging countries with larger populations in shaping the economy and global finance.

In the area of the G20, concrete tendencies can thus mature which, when worked out properly in the appropriate technical centres, will be able to guide the competent bodies on the national and regional level towards consolidating existing institutions and creating new ones with appropriate and effective instruments on the international level.

Moreover, the G20 leaders themselves said in their final Statement in Pittsburgh 2009: “The economic crisis demonstrates the importance of ushering in a new era of sustainable global economic activity grounded in responsibility”. To tackle the crisis and open up a new era “of responsibility”, in addition to technical and short-term measures, the leaders put forth the proposal “to reform the global architecture to meet the needs of the 21st century,” and later the proposal “to launch a framework that lays out the policies and the way we act together to generate strong, sustainable and balanced global growth”. Therefore, a process of reflection and reforms needs to be launched that will explore creative and realistic avenues for taking advantage of the positive aspects of already existing forums.

Specific attention should be paid to the reform of the international monetary system and, in particular, the commitment to create some form of global monetary management, something that is already implicit in the Statutes of the International Monetary Fund. It is obvious that to some extent this is equivalent to putting the existing exchange systems up for discussion in order to find effective means of coordination and supervision. This process must also involve the emerging and developing countries in defining the stages of a gradual adaptation of the existing instruments. In fact, one can see an emerging requirement for a body that will carry out the functions of a kind of “central world bank” that regulates the flow and system of monetary exchanges similar to the national central banks. The underlying logic of peace, coordination and common vision which led to the Bretton Woods Agreements needs to be dusted off in order to provide adequate answers to the current questions. On the regional level, this process could begin by strengthening the existing institutions, such as the European Central Bank. However, this would require not only a reflection on the economic and financial level, but also and first of all on the

political level, so as to create the set of public institutions that will guarantee the unity and consistency of the common decisions.

These measures ought to be conceived of as some of the first steps in view of a public Authority with universal jurisdiction; as a first stage in a longer effort by the global community to steer its institutions towards achieving the common good. Other stages will have to follow in which the dynamics familiar to us may become more marked, but they may also be accompanied by changes which would be useless to try to predict today. In this process, the primacy of the spiritual and of ethics needs to be restored and, with them, the primacy of politics – which is responsible for the common good – over the economy and finance. These latter need to be brought back within the boundaries of their real vocation and function, including their social function, in consideration of their obvious responsibilities to society, in order to nourish markets and financial institutions which are really at the service of the person, which are capable of responding to the needs of the common good and universal brotherhood, and which transcend all forms of economist stagnation and performative mercantilism.

On the basis of this sort of ethical approach, it seems advisable to reflect, for example, on:

- a) taxation measures on financial transactions through fair but modulated rates with charges proportionate to the complexity of the operations, especially those made on the “secondary” market. Such taxation would be very useful in promoting global development and sustainability according to the principles of social justice and solidarity. It could also contribute to the creation of a world reserve fund to support the economies of the countries hit by crisis as well as the recovery of their monetary and financial system;
- b) forms of recapitalization of banks with public funds making the support conditional on “virtuous” behaviours aimed at developing the “real economy”;
- c) the definition of the domains of ordinary credit and of Investment Banking. This distinction would allow a more effective management of the “shadow markets” which have no controls and limits.

It is sensible and realistic to allow the necessary time to build up broad consensuses, but the goal of the universal common good with its inescapable demands is waiting on the horizon. Moreover, it is hoped that those in universities and other institutions who educate tomorrow's leadership will work hard to prepare them for their responsibilities to discern the global public good and serve it in a constantly changing world. The gap between ethical training and technical preparation needs to be filled by highlighting in a particular way the inescapable synergy between the two levels of practical doing (praxis) and of boundless human striving (poiësis). The same effort is required from all those who are in a position to enlighten world public opinion in order to help it to brave this new world, no longer with anxiety but in hope and solidarity.

## Conclusions

Under the current uncertainties, in a society capable of mobilizing immense means but whose cultural and moral reflection is still inadequate with regard to their use in achieving the appropriate ends, we are invited to not give in and to build above all a meaningful future for the generations to come. We should not be afraid to propose new ideas, even if they might destabilize pre-existing balances of power that prevail over the weakest. They are a seed thrown to the ground that will sprout and hurry towards bearing fruit. As Benedict XVI exhorts us, agents on all levels – social, political, economic, professional – are urgently needed who have the courage to serve and to promote the common good through an upright life. Only they will succeed in living and seeing beyond the appearances of things and perceiving the gap between existing reality and untried possibilities.

Paul VI emphasized the revolutionary power of “forward-looking imagination” that can perceive the possibilities inscribed in the present and guide people towards a new future. By freeing his imagination, man frees his existence. Through an effort of community imagination, it is possible to transform not only institutions but also lifestyles and encourage a better future for all peoples. Modern States became structured wholes over time and reinforced sovereignty within their own territory. But social, cultural and political conditions have gradually changed. Their interdependence has grown – so it has become natural to think of an international community that is integrated and increasingly ruled by a shared system – but a worse form of nationalism has lingered on, according to which the State feels it can achieve the good of its own citizens in a self-sufficient way.

Today all of this seems anachronistic and surreal, and all the nations, great or small, together with their governments, are called to go beyond the “state of nature” which would keep States in a never-ending struggle with one another. Globalization, despite some of its negative aspects, is unifying peoples more and prompting them to move towards a new “rule of law” on the supranational level, supported by a more intense and fruitful collaboration. With dynamics similar to those that put an end in the past to the “anarchical” struggle between rival clans and kingdoms with regard to the creation of national states, today humanity needs to be committed to the transition from a situation of archaic struggles between national entities, to a new model of a more cohesive, polyarchic international society that respects every people's identity within the multifaceted riches of a single humanity. Such a passage, which is already timidly under way, would ensure the citizens of all countries – regardless of their size or power – peace and security, development, and free, stable and transparent markets. As John Paul II warns us, “Just as the time has finally come when in individual States a system of private vendetta and reprisal has given way to the rule of law, so too a similar step forward is now urgently needed in the international community.” Time has come to conceive of institutions with universal competence, now that vital goods shared by the entire human family are at stake, goods which the individual States cannot promote and protect by themselves.

So conditions exist for definitively going beyond a 'Westphalian' international order in which the States feel the need for cooperation but do not seize the opportunity to integrate their respective sovereignties for the common good of peoples. It is the task of today's generation to recognize and consciously to accept these new world dynamics for the achievement of a universal common good. Of course, this transformation will be made at the cost of a gradual, balanced transfer of a part of each nation's powers to a world Authority and to regional Authorities, but this is necessary at a time when the dynamism of human society and the economy and the progress of technology are transcending borders, which are in fact already very eroded in a globalized world.

The birth of a new society and the building of new institutions with a universal vocation and competence are a prerogative and a duty for everyone, with no distinction. What is at stake is the common good of humanity and the future itself. In this context, for every Christian there is a special call of the Spirit to become committed decisively and generously so that the many dynamics under way will be channelled towards prospects of fraternity and the common good. An immense amount of work is to be done towards the integral development of peoples and of every person. As the Fathers said at the Second Vatican Council, this is a mission that is both social and spiritual, which "to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God." In a world on its way to rapid globalization, the reference to a world Authority becomes the only horizon compatible with the new realities of our time and the needs of humankind. However, it should not be forgotten that this development, given wounded human nature, will not come about without anguish and suffering. Through the account of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), the Bible warns us how the "diversity" of peoples can turn into a vehicle for selfishness and an instrument of division. In humanity there is a real risk that peoples will end up not understanding each other and that cultural diversities will lead to irremediable oppositions. The image of the Tower of Babel also warns us that we must avoid a "unity" that is only apparent, where selfishness and divisions endure because the foundations of the society are not stable. In both cases, Babel is the image of what peoples and individuals can become when they do not recognize their intrinsic transcendent dignity and brotherhood.

The spirit of Babel is the antithesis of the Spirit of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12), of God's design for the whole of humanity: that is, unity in truth. Only a spirit of concord that rises above divisions and conflicts will allow humanity to be authentically one family and to conceive of a new world with the creation of a world public Authority at the service of the common good.

*[End of Vatican Paper]*

## APPENDIX B

[Official document of the Roman Catholic Church]

### **Formulary for the Renunciation of Protestantism - Hungary, 1823 –**

#### *Start of confession:*

1. We believe and confess that we have been brought from heretical ways and faith to the true and saving faith of Roman Catholics, by the singular care of our high spiritual and temporal magistracy, solely and wholly in consequence of the active diligence and help of Messieurs the Jesuit Fathers, and that we do of our own free will, and without any compulsion embrace the same, and we desire both with our mouths and tongues to make this known publicly to the whole world.
2. We confess that the Pope of Rome is the Head of the Church, and incapable of error.
3. We confess and believe, that the Pope of Rome is the Viceregent of Christ, and has full power according to his pleasure, to forgive and retain the sins of men, to cast into hell, and to excommunicate.
4. We confess, that all that the Pope has lately established, whether from the Scriptures or not, also whatsoever he has enjoined, is true, godly, and saving; and that every man ought to hold it in higher veneration than the law of the living God.
5. We confess, that the most holy Pope ought to be honoured with goodly honour, and indeed with the deepest reverence, such as belongs to the Lord Christ himself.
6. We confess and affirm, that the Pope ought to be obeyed by all, in all places, as their most holy Father; wherefore every heretic who lives in opposition to his institutions, ought, without any exception, without any mercy, to be cast not only far out of sight by fire, but body and soul into hell.
7. We confess, that the reading of Holy Scripture is the origin of all factions and sects, as also a fountain of blasphemy.
8. We confess, that to invoke departed saints, to venerate their holy images, to bow the knee before them, to appoint processions to them, to adorn them, to burn lamps before them, is godly, holy, useful, and wholesome.

9. We confess, that each priest is much greater than Mary the Mother of God herself as she brought forth the Lord Christ once only and brings him forth no more: but a Roman priest not only offers and creates the Lord Christ, when he will, but also always, even after he has created him, he swallows him entirely, at his pleasure.
10. We confess, that to read masses for the dead, to distribute and ask alms is useful and wholesome.
11. We confess, that the Pope of Rome has power to alter the Scriptures, and at his pleasure to add or take from them.
12. We confess, that the souls after death are cleansed by the fire of Purgatory – and that the mass offering of the Priests is their only hope of delivery from it.
13. We confess, that the use of the Eucharist under one kind is good and safe, but under both kinds is heretical and damnable.
14. We confess and believe, that whosoever receives the Eucharist under one kind receives the whole Christ, both body and blood, with his Divinity and bones – but whosoever receives it under both kinds eats only so much bread.
15. We believe, that there are seven true and genuine sacraments.
16. We confess, that God takes pleasure in images, and is known by men through the intervention of them.
17. We confess, that the Holy Virgin Mary, should be considered both by angels and men as higher than Christ the Son of God himself.
18. We confess that the Holy Virgin Mary is the Queen of Heaven, and reigns together with the Son – and that after her pleasure the Son must do all things.
19. We confess that the bones of the saints possess great virtue, on account of which they should be revered by men, and chapels built to them.
20. We confess, that the Roman Catholic faith is infallible, divine, saving, ancient and true: but that the Protestant faith (which we from our hearts renounce), is false, erroneous, blasphemous, execrable, heretical, pernicious, seditious, impious; whilst on the other hand the Roman religion is complete and perfect in all interpretations, under one only form, good and wholesome; we execrate therefore all other religions which these disputatious and impious heretics profess under a double form [*Lutheran and Calvinist - editor*]. We execrate our parents who have brought us up in this heretical faith; we execrate also every one that ever made the Roman Catholic faith doubtful or suspected by us. Likewise also the Communion that offered to us the execrable cup. Yea, we execrate ourselves, and declare ourselves execrable, inasmuch as we have been partakers of that execrable heretical cup, of which we ought not to have tasted.

21. We confess, that the Holy Scripture is an imperfect and a dead letter, so far as it is not interpreted by the Pope of Rome, and which it is permitted to be read by every layman.
22. We confess, that one mass said by a Roman priest is much more beneficial to the soul, than a hundred sermons of Protestants; and, therefore, we execrate all their books in which these heretical and blasphemous doctrines are contained. We execrate all the good works performed by us while we lived in that heretical faith, inasmuch as they will profit us nothing before God in the last judgment. All this we do out of a sincere and steady mind, declaring by a pubic recantation of this heretical faith, in the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ that the Church of Rome in the above-mentioned, and all other articles, is true; moreover we also swear, that so long as we have blood in our bodies, we will persecute this execrable Protestant faith, in private and in public, by violence, and by fraud, by words and by deeds, and even with the sword. Lastly, we swear before God, and the angels, that neither through fear nor favour will we ever renounce this our change, nor ever again turn from the saving Roman Catholic and holy Church, to the execrable Protestant heretical doctrines.

### ***End of confession***

**Source:** The Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine, No. XXXVI, June 1828, Volume VI, from the section entitled 'Foreign Religious Intelligence', pps.454-456. Translated from the German. Available online as a digitised Google Book.

Link to source (scroll down to p.454):

[http://books.google.ie/books?id=UBoEAAAQAAJ&pg=PP15&dq=Christian+Examiner+and+Church+of+Ireland+Magazine,+Volume+VI+1828+foreign+intelligence&hl=en&e\\_i=ep-2To6VEsSGhQe53pWwBA&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.ie/books?id=UBoEAAAQAAJ&pg=PP15&dq=Christian+Examiner+and+Church+of+Ireland+Magazine,+Volume+VI+1828+foreign+intelligence&hl=en&e_i=ep-2To6VEsSGhQe53pWwBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

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# Written in Hell:

## An Explosive Document which the Roman Catholic Bishops Do NOT Want You to See

by Jeremy James



In an earlier paper, [Why Christians should Never Pray to the Virgin Mary](#), we set out detailed proof that the Roman Catholic Church is really a disguised form of the old Babylonian religion. The paper covered a wide range of issues, notably the exercise of supernatural power by the Roman Catholic clergy, the occult nature of many aspects of Roman Catholic theology, and the pagan roots of Marian worship. If you have not read that paper it is strongly recommended that you take the time to do so. It was addressed, not just to sincere and well-meaning Catholics – who have been utterly deceived by the false version of Christianity taught by Rome – but also to born-again Christians who have been tricked into believing that the Ecumenical Movement is consistent with the Word of God

The Ecumenical Movement seeks to unify all branches of Christianity under a streamlined, non-biblical set of ‘Christian’ precepts. In reality the movement, which has been operating for decades, is an elaborate programme designed by Rome to lure true Bible-believing Christians into accepting the false theology taught by the Papacy. One of the best-known vehicles for Ecumenical indoctrination is the Emerging Church movement.



Our task in this paper – by exposing a little-known and seemingly confidential document once used by the Jesuit Order – is to present in a concise form and in her own words the main heresies and false doctrines taught by the Roman Catholic Church. No doubt some readers will have viewed our earlier papers about Rome with a measure of scepticism, believing perhaps that we cherry-picked the evidence which suited our purpose. However, the plain statements in this document are so compelling that they should convince even the most hardened sceptic that Roman Catholicism is a sworn enemy of Bible-based Christianity .

## **Masters of Deception**

As masters in the art of deception, the highest levels of the Roman Catholic leadership know how to package their message so that, by and large, its non-biblical components are never seen to clash too strongly with the Word of God. The vast majority of Roman Catholics take on trust everything that Rome tells them but fail conspicuously to do what the LORD himself has asked them to do, namely to check and compare everything they are being taught by Rome with the truths set out in his Holy Word. If something conflicts with the Bible, then it is false and must be rejected. This ought to be a simple and straightforward matter, but sadly a Roman Catholic who studies the Bible regularly, in a prayerful and sincere manner, is about as rare as a silver dollar.

The Vatican has taken care for many years to disguise the dark heart of the Roman Catholic faith and to present a benign and caring face to the world. However, two centuries ago the Catholic leadership was both more strident and more uncompromising in the way it stated its position. Since the vast majority of Roman Catholics in those days were either illiterate or very poorly educated, it was a fairly simple task to keep them in line. There was little or no need for subtlety or for what is described today as a seeker-sensitive approach. The Roman church didn't have to worry about alienating Protestants since it had not at that stage embarked on its ecumenical agenda. They viewed Protestants, not as 'separated brethren' to be won over by deception and sweet words, but simply as enemies to be destroyed.

This legacy has left us with a number of valuable documents which reveal what the church of Rome is really like, without the sugar-coated platitudes and ambivalent rhetoric which characterise her 'public' teachings today. In our earlier paper, [Why Christians should Never Pray to the Virgin Mary](#), we quoted extensively from two high-ranking Roman theologians of bygone times – Alphonsus Liguori and John Henry Newman – since their writings revealed far more about the pagan and idolatrous foundations of Catholic theology than just about anything the Vatican has released in the last forty years.

## **A Truly Disturbing 'Confession of Faith' from 1828**

We have since come across an astonishing document, published in English in 1828, which, in a very concise form, sheds remarkable light on the true nature of the Roman Catholic Church – *Formulary for the Renunciation of Protestantism* (See **Appendix A**).

We know that the dogmas outlined in this document are still part of mainstream Catholic theology since, as she often boasts, the Roman Catholic Church never changes. A dogma is never amended or annulled, but simply presented a little differently as occasion demands. In light of this, and given the very disturbing nature of its contents, this is without doubt a document that the Vatican bishops and theologians do not want to become more widely known, especially among Christians. Its brazen statement of Catholic supremacy, laced throughout with blasphemous proclamations and pagan beliefs, is truly breathtaking.

Before we examine it more closely, we should note that the words *execrable* and *execrate*, which occur several times in the document, have the same meaning today as they had in 1828. The definitions given in the *American Dictionary of the English Language* by Noah Webster, 1828, were as follows:

*Execrable*: adjective - see Execrate

*Execrate*: transitive verb. Literally, to curse; to denounce evil against, or to imprecate evil on; hence, to detest utterly; to abhor; to abominate.

In short, they are more than just terms of disapproval, but of hatred and revulsion. Though not in common usage today, they bitterly express one's utmost contempt for another person or persons.

### **Step-by-Step Examination of a Document Written in Hell**

We will now look at each proposition in turn and see how this so-called confession of faith, which dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, assembles itself step by step into a creed which could only have originated in hell. It was intended for use by Hungarians who were converting from Protestantism to the Roman Catholic faith:

**“1. We believe and confess that we have been brought from heretical ways and faith to the true and saving faith of Roman Catholics, by the singular care of our high spiritual and temporal magistracy, solely and wholly in consequence of the active diligence and help of Messieurs the Jesuit Fathers, and that we do of our own free will, and without any compulsion embrace the same, and we desire both with our mouths and tongues to make this known publicly to the whole world.”**

Note the direct involvement here of the Jesuit Order. It is highly unusual for this secretive organisation to stand in the front line. Normally the Jesuits prefer to work through an intermediary or at a distance from the events they want to influence. Their explicit association with the ‘confession’ would suggest that they did not intend it to be seen by the general public. Confessing converts were likely required to repeat the text as it was recited aloud in their presence, but did not thereafter receive a copy.

**“2. We confess that the Pope of Rome is the Head of the Church, and incapable of error.”**

The implication is clear: No man is infallible; only God is infallible; therefore the Pope must be a god. The doctrine of Papal Infallibility was not officially announced by the Vatican until 1870. However, as is evident from this document, the Jesuit Order – which controls the Roman Catholic Church – was using it as an instrument of coercion long before that time. They knew it induced the same kind of unthinking loyalty and blind subservience in new converts that the guru-disciple relationship does today among members of a cult.

**“3. We confess and believe, that the Pope of Rome is the Viceregent of Christ, and has full power according to his pleasure, to forgive and retain the sins of men, to cast into hell, and to excommunicate.”**

This reinforces the thrust of proposition #2. The Pope is portrayed as a god-on-earth, with total power over the individual. If he chooses, he can condemn one's soul to hell for eternity.

**“4. We confess, that all that the Pope has lately established, whether from the Scriptures or not, also whatsoever he has enjoined, is true, godly, and saving; and that every man ought to hold it in higher veneration than the law of the living God.”**

This astonishing proposition puts the Pope's authority on a par with that of the living God. His word is divine and even supersedes the Bible itself. Men are enjoined to venerate it more than holy scripture.

**“5. We confess, that the most holy Pope ought to be honoured with goodly honour, and indeed with the deepest reverence, such as belongs to the Lord Christ himself.”**

Since the Pope is a god-on-earth he must be revered as such at all times, as though he were Christ himself.

**“6. We confess and affirm, that the Pope ought to be obeyed by all, in all places, as their most holy Father; wherefore every heretic who lives in opposition to his institutions, ought, without any exception, without any mercy, to be cast not only far out of sight by fire, but body and soul into hell.”**

This is the fifth proposition in succession to assert that the Pope is a god-on-earth, with unconditional authority over all men. All who oppose him are heretics and deserve “without any exception” to be destroyed.

**“7. We confess, that the reading of Holy Scripture is the origin of all factions and sects, as also a fountain of blasphemy.”**

This proposition is designed to reinforce the belief that the Pope’s authority is utterly beyond question. Should anyone dare study the Bible to determine whether the Pope is acting in accordance with God’s will, he is condemned as a blasphemer and a heretic. Unless a person is given express permission to do so, possession and reading of the Bible is forbidden.

**“8. We confess, that to invoke departed saints, to venerate their holy images, to bow the knee before them, to appoint processions to them, to adorn them, to burn lamps before them, is godly, holy, useful, and wholesome.”**

This proposition approves and encourages the veneration of idols and the invocation of the dead, both of which the Bible categorically condemns as idolatry and witchcraft.

**“9. We confess, that each priest is much greater than Mary the Mother of God herself as she brought forth the Lord Christ once only and brings him forth no more: but a Roman priest not only offers and creates the Lord Christ, when he will, but also always, even after he has created him, he swallows him entirely, at his pleasure.”**

This proposition gives a rank and status to a Roman Catholic priest which exceeds that of a goddess and is not dissimilar to that of a wizard or a magician. He has the power to conjure up Jesus at will and to eat him at his pleasure.

**“10. We confess, that to read masses for the dead, to distribute and ask alms is useful and wholesome.”**

This proclaims that the Catholic Church has the power to influence the destiny of all who have departed this earthly realm. It obliges the convert to accept that the mysterious influence which the priests exercise over him in life will continue after he dies.

**“11. We confess, that the Pope of Rome has power to alter the Scriptures, and at his pleasure to add or take from them.”**

Incredibly the Pope’s powers are hereby increased even further, to the point where he can change the Word of God at his pleasure. Hubris of this magnitude is a clear mark of a person or persons in total rebellion against God.

**“12. We confess, that the souls after death are cleansed by the fire of Purgatory – and that the mass offering of the Priests is their only hope of delivery from it.”**

This refers again to the alleged power of the Roman Catholic priests and their ability to control one’s destiny after death. It also introduces one of the most satanic deceptions ever devised by man, the utterly unbiblical concept known as purgatory. It denies the unconditional salvation that is in Christ and supplements it with the sacramental, ceremonial powers of the priestcraft.

**“13. We confess, that the use of the Eucharist under one kind is good and safe, but under both kinds is heretical and damnable.”**

This proposition reminds the convert that the priest has the power to conjure up Christ at his pleasure by turning ordinary bread and wine into human flesh and human blood. If the convert does not believe that the priest has the power to manifest and control Christ in this way, he will be condemned to hell.

**“14. We confess and believe, that whosoever receives the Eucharist under one kind receives the whole Christ, both body and blood, with his Divinity and bones – but whosoever receives it under both kinds eats only so much bread.”**

This continues with the theme of the previous proposition, reinforcing the belief that the priest can exercise a mysterious power over Christ himself.

**“15. We believe, that there are seven true and genuine sacraments.”**

This proposition is a condensed form of a complex idea, namely that the priest is able, through his special mystical abilities, to conduct seven prescribed rituals and ceremonies which can summon and direct supernatural power.

**“16. We confess, that God takes pleasure in images, and is known by men through the intervention of them.”**

This proposition takes up a theme first expressed at #8 above. It is designed to reinforce the role of idolatry in the life of the convert and to convince him that all such practices are pleasing to God. This proposition completely erases the second commandment from the Bible and thereby achieves one of Satan’s greatest goals. The LORD has made it perfectly clear throughout the Bible that, not only does he not hear prayers addressed to him via idols and images, but he utterly abhors them.

**“17. We confess, that the Holy Virgin Mary, should be considered both by angels and men as higher than Christ the Son of God himself.”**

It would hardly seem possible to add to the blasphemies and obscenities that appear in this short document. Here the Son of God is assigned a spiritual rank below that of a created being. As incredible as it may seem, the Jesuits esteem the Virgin in much the same way that a pagan worships a goddess. They claim not to worship her, but only to ‘revere’ and ‘venerate’ her. But this is a great deception since they actually **pray** to her, which is worship in the full sense of the word. Proposition #17 makes it perfectly plain that the Virgin is a Roman Catholic goddess and that she is higher than Christ himself.

**“18. We confess that the Holy Virgin Mary is the Queen of Heaven, and reigns together with the Son – and that after her pleasure the Son must do all things.”**

The Roman Catholic Church has long sought to replace Christ with a goddess. Here the new convert is being asked to do so from the moment he converts to the Roman Catholic faith. In our earlier paper, [Why Christians should Never Pray to the Virgin Mary](#), we examine this vile blasphemy in greater detail.

**“19. We confess that the bones of the saints possess great virtue, on account of which they should be revered by men, and chapels built to them.”**

Like goddess worship, necromancy is an important element in witchcraft. The body parts of deceased witches and wizards were believed to possess a magical potency. That such objects should be “reverenced by men” is unsurprising in the context of witchcraft, but utterly grotesque from a Biblical perspective. Nevertheless the Roman Catholic Church approves of such practices and even builds chapels over the bones of dead ‘saints.’

**“20. We confess, that the Roman Catholic faith is infallible, divine, saving, ancient and true: but that the Protestant faith (which we from our hearts renounce), is false, erroneous, blasphemous, execrable, heretical, pernicious, seditious, impious; whilst on the other hand the Roman religion is complete and perfect in all interpretations, under one only form, good and wholesome; we execrate therefore all other religions which these disputatious and impious heretics profess under a double form [*Lutheran and Calvinist - editor*]. We execrate our parents who have brought us up in this heretical faith; we execrate also every one that ever made the Roman Catholic faith doubtful or suspected by us. Likewise also the Communion that offered to us the execrable cup. Yea, we execrate ourselves, and declare ourselves execrable, inasmuch as we have been partakers of that execrable heretical cup, of which we ought not to have tasted.”**

This proposition requires the new convert to curse and revile the Protestant faith and even to denounce his parents for having reared him in it. Extremist language of this kind provides a rich breeding ground for later acts of bigotry and persecution.

**“21. We confess, that the Holy Scripture is an imperfect and a dead letter, so far as it is not interpreted by the Pope of Rome, and which it is permitted to be read by every layman.”**

To make absolutely sure that the new convert has grasped the basic message – that the Pope is god-on-earth and that the Bible is a barrier to understanding Christianity – this sickening proposition confirms that it is illegal for lay Roman Catholics to read the Bible except under clerical supervision.

**“22. We confess, that one mass said by a Roman priest is much more beneficial to the soul, than a hundred sermons of Protestants; and, therefore, we execrate all their books in which these heretical and blasphemous doctrines are contained. We execrate all the good works performed by us while we lived in that heretical faith, inasmuch as they will profit us nothing before God in the last judgment. All this we do out of a sincere and steady mind, declaring by a pubic recantation of this heretical faith, in the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ that the Church of Rome in the above-mentioned, and all other articles, is true; moreover we also swear, that so long as we have blood in our bodies, we will persecute this execrable Protestant faith, in private and in public, by violence, and by fraud, by words and by deeds, and even with the sword. Lastly, we swear before God, and the angels, that neither through fear nor favour will we ever renounce this our change, nor ever again turn from the saving Roman Catholic and holy Church, to the execrable Protestant heretical doctrines.”**

The entire confession rises to a deafening crescendo in this final pronouncement. The new convert is required to pledge himself to the destruction of the Protestant faith, if necessary by violence and bloodshed. In typical fashion, it approves “fraud, by words and by deeds” toward this end – the Jesuits teach that duplicitous and criminal acts which advance the cause of the Roman Catholic Church are not sinful.

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We have no doubt that some readers will be stung by these revelations and will doubt the authenticity of the attached document. If so, then why not check the source online? – the link is provided at the end of **Appendix A**. Many of the beliefs expressed in the document can be found in other Roman Catholic writings, penned by senior theologians and Vatican-approved Doctors of the Church. Our earlier paper, [Why Christians should Never Pray to the Virgin Mary](#), provides plenty of leads for readers who are anxious to establish the facts to their own satisfaction.

In our experience, few Roman Catholics have any interest in matters of this nature. As the Bible says, the End Time will be characterised by so-called Christians who will not tolerate sound doctrine, who will scoff at scripturally-based evidence, and who will listen only to what pleases them.

But born-again Christians need to recognise the danger! The church of Rome is pouring huge resources into the Ecumenical Movement in order to infiltrate, undermine and eradicate true Biblical Christianity. She hates Protestantism and is determined to destroy it. The ecumenical document, *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* (1994), which was signed by many leading figures in the Evangelical church, was a gross betrayal of true Christianity and a clear sign of the approaching End Time.

### **Indistinguishable from Witchcraft**

In higher levels of witchcraft occult power is generated, not just by contemptuously rejecting what the Bible teaches, but by taking its principles and precepts and turning them upside down, by mocking and abusing them, and thereby cursing and reviling its Holy Author. As we have seen from our step-by-step analysis, the Roman Catholic ‘confession’ is actually a rebellious manifesto. Again and again it rejects what the Bible plainly teaches. As the LORD said, “rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft” (1 Samuel 15:23).

Specifically, the document displays many of the hallmarks of witchcraft by

- putting a man in place of God;
- putting human words before God’s words;
- putting a woman above Christ;
- promoting goddess worship;
- promoting necromancy;
- promoting priestly magic;
- dismissing the Bible as a dead letter;
- promoting the veneration of idols and images;
- obliging God to comply with the will of man;
- approving of lying and bloodshed in the cause of Rome;
- replacing the saving blood of Christ with priestly intervention.

Even the Freemasons – who admit to worshipping Lucifer – would have difficulty compiling a document that expressed the same amount of blasphemy in a thousand words. And yet the confession of faith is grounded firmly in longstanding Roman Catholic dogma!

If you are a Roman Catholic, then please reflect thoughtfully and prayerfully on the opinions expressed in this paper. If you are a born-again Christian whose denomination or local church is sympathetic to the Ecumenical Movement or the Emerging Church Movement, then please, *please* alert your fellow believers to the awful dangers facing born-again Christians in the world today.

**Jeremy James**  
**Ireland**  
**16 November 2011**

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attack on true Biblical Christianity, visit**

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## APPENDIX A

### **Formulary for the Renunciation of Protestantism - Hungary, 1823 –**

#### *Start of confession:*

1. We believe and confess that we have been brought from heretical ways and faith to the true and saving faith of Roman Catholics, by the singular care of our high spiritual and temporal magistracy, solely and wholly in consequence of the active diligence and help of Messieurs the Jesuit Fathers, and that we do of our own free will, and without any compulsion embrace the same, and we desire both with our mouths and tongues to make this known publicly to the whole world.
2. We confess that the Pope of Rome is the Head of the Church, and incapable of error.
3. We confess and believe, that the Pope of Rome is the Viceregent of Christ, and has full power according to his pleasure, to forgive and retain the sins of men, to cast into hell, and to excommunicate.
4. We confess, that all that the Pope has lately established, whether from the Scriptures or not, also whatsoever he has enjoined, is true, godly, and saving; and that every man ought to hold it in higher veneration than the law of the living God.
5. We confess, that the most holy Pope ought to be honoured with goodly honour, and indeed with the deepest reverence, such as belongs to the Lord Christ himself.
6. We confess and affirm, that the Pope ought to be obeyed by all, in all places, as their most holy Father; wherefore every heretic who lives in opposition to his institutions, ought, without any exception, without any mercy, to be cast not only far out of sight by fire, but body and soul into hell.
7. We confess, that the reading of Holy Scripture is the origin of all factions and sects, as also a fountain of blasphemy.
8. We confess, that to invoke departed saints, to venerate their holy images, to bow the knee before them, to appoint processions to them, to adorn them, to burn lamps before them, is godly, holy, useful, and wholesome.

9. We confess, that each priest is much greater than Mary the Mother of God herself as she brought forth the Lord Christ once only and brings him forth no more: but a Roman priest not only offers and creates the Lord Christ, when he will, but also always, even after he has created him, he swallows him entirely, at his pleasure.
10. We confess, that to read masses for the dead, to distribute and ask alms is useful and wholesome.
11. We confess, that the Pope of Rome has power to alter the Scriptures, and at his pleasure to add or take from them.
12. We confess, that the souls after death are cleansed by the fire of Purgatory – and that the mass offering of the Priests is their only hope of delivery from it.
13. We confess, that the use of the Eucharist under one kind is good and safe, but under both kinds is heretical and damnable.
14. We confess and believe, that whosoever receives the Eucharist under one kind receives the whole Christ, both body and blood, with his Divinity and bones – but whosoever receives it under both kinds eats only so much bread.
15. We believe, that there are seven true and genuine sacraments.
16. We confess, that God takes pleasure in images, and is known by men through the intervention of them.
17. We confess, that the Holy Virgin Mary, should be considered both by angels and men as higher than Christ the Son of God himself.
18. We confess that the Holy Virgin Mary is the Queen of Heaven, and reigns together with the Son – and that after her pleasure the Son must do all things.
19. We confess that the bones of the saints possess great virtue, on account of which they should be revered by men, and chapels built to them.
20. We confess, that the Roman Catholic faith is infallible, divine, saving, ancient and true: but that the Protestant faith (which we from our hearts renounce), is false, erroneous, blasphemous, execrable, heretical, pernicious, seditious, impious; whilst on the other hand the Roman religion is complete and perfect in all interpretations, under one only form, good and wholesome; we execrate therefore all other religions which these disputatious and impious heretics profess under a double form [*Lutheran and Calvinist - editor*]. We execrate our parents who have brought us up in this heretical faith; we execrate also every one that ever made the Roman Catholic faith doubtful or suspected by us. Likewise also the Communion that offered to us the execrable cup. Yea, we execrate ourselves, and declare ourselves execrable, inasmuch as we have been partakers of that execrable heretical cup, of which we ought not to have tasted.

21. We confess, that the Holy Scripture is an imperfect and a dead letter, so far as it is not interpreted by the Pope of Rome, and which it is permitted to be read by every layman.
22. We confess, that one mass said by a Roman priest is much more beneficial to the soul, than a hundred sermons of Protestants; and, therefore, we execrate all their books in which these heretical and blasphemous doctrines are contained. We execrate all the good works performed by us while we lived in that heretical faith, inasmuch as they will profit us nothing before God in the last judgment. All this we do out of a sincere and steady mind, declaring by a pubic recantation of this heretical faith, in the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ that the Church of Rome in the above-mentioned, and all other articles, is true; moreover we also swear, that so long as we have blood in our bodies, we will persecute this execrable Protestant faith, in private and in public, by violence, and by fraud, by words and by deeds, and even with the sword. Lastly, we swear before God, and the angels, that neither through fear nor favour will we ever renounce this our change, nor ever again turn from the saving Roman Catholic and holy Church, to the execrable Protestant heretical doctrines.

***End of confession***

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# Understanding the Rapture from a Strictly Biblical Perspective

by Jeremy James



## Introduction

This study has been compiled to help Christians acquire a scripturally-based understanding of the event known as the Rapture. While it does not advocate a specific position – Pre, Mid or Post – the paper focuses mainly on the Pre-Tribulation position since most of the arguments in support of the other two positions are determined largely by the interpretation that one places on those passages of scripture which are otherwise used to support the Pre-Tribulation position.

## Definition of the Rapture

The ‘Rapture’ is an interpretation based on a number of passages of scripture which prophesy that all saved believers (as distinct from unsaved members of the professing church), who are alive at the time of this event, will be caught up in the air to meet Christ, will receive immortalised or glorified bodies, and will dwell thereafter with Christ in his heavenly kingdom. The Rapture is preceded, seemingly on the same day, by the resurrection of all believers who had died in Christ.

## **Principal references to the Rapture in Scripture**

The two principal passages in scripture regarding the Rapture are as follows:

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

- [13] *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*
- [14] *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*
- [15] *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*
- [16] *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*
- [17] *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*
- [18] *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-58**

- [51] *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*
- [52] *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
- [53] *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*
- [54] *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*
- [55] *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*
- [56] *The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.*
- [57] *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- [58] *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

## **The word ‘Rapture’**

The Greek word translated as *rapture* in English is ‘harpazo’, which is Greek for ‘snatch’ or ‘pluck’ (Strong’s G726). In other parts of the King James Bible this word is translated as follows

<i>catch up</i>	4
<i>take by force</i>	3
<i>catch away</i>	2
<i>pluck</i>	2
<i>catch</i>	1
<i>pull</i>	1

## **Precedents or Types of the Rapture**

There are several precedents for the rapture – the translation of Enoch, the translation of Elijah, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the resurrection and ascension of the Two Witnesses in the Book of Revelation, and the translation of Philip (but only to another place on earth). Regarding the latter Acts 8:39 states: *“And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”* The same word, *harpazo*, is used in relation to Philip. According to Acts 8:40, *“Philip was found at Azotus”* (which is also known as Ashdod and is located about thirty miles from Gaza).

Two episodes in the Old Testament also prefigure the Rapture by depicting the removal of the righteous by divine intervention – Noah and his family and Lot and his family. It is noteworthy that these events involved families, just like the brethren (one body) who comprise the Church.

## **The Rapture as part of Christian doctrine**

The Rapture was identified as a distinct tenet of Christian doctrine in the New Testament. Verse 51 of 1 Corinthians 15 says, *“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”* This means that believers who are alive at the time of the Rapture will not experience death but will receive immortalised bodies.

The Rapture is an event which believers are meant to eagerly anticipate. The Bible ends with the words: *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come...Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”* (Revelation 22:17 and 20).

## **References by Christ to the Rapture**

It is believed that Christ was referring to the Rapture when he said: *“And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”* (Matthew 24:39-41)

When referring to the calamitous events of the End Time the Messiah confirmed that some believers would escape the wrath to come and would “*stand before the Son of man*”, namely Christ himself in his glorified state – “*Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*” (Luke 21:36) Since Christ will not be on earth during the main part of the tribulation the believers concerned must be taken alive (and miraculously) from the earth in order to stand before him.

## **The Rapture and the Second Coming are Two Separate Events**

Much confusion arises when Bible scholars fail to distinguish between the Rapture and the Second Coming. Scripture makes it very plain that these are two distinct events, separated by an unspecified period of time:

### **~ The Rapture as a distinct event**

At the Rapture Christ does not return to the surface of the earth but catches up believers to meet Him above the earth, taking them directly to heaven: “*I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*” (John 14:3). Also, “*Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [i.e. the resurrected dead] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

At the Rapture there will be a resurrection of all church-age believers who had died up to that time: “*the dead shall be raised incorruptible*” (1 Corinthians 15:52-53) and “*the dead in Christ shall rise first...*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

At the Rapture the bodies of living believers (like those who are resurrected) will instantly become immortal: “*We shall not all sleep [i.e. die], but we shall all be changed...the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [who are living] shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*” (1 Corinthians 15:51-53) and “*we which are alive...shall be caught up together with them [the resurrected church-age believers]...to meet the Lord in the air [in immortalised bodies]*” (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

At the Rapture the earth is in a state of relative calm and none are expecting judgment from God: “*And as it was in the days of Noah [when the world was not expecting judgment of any kind]...they did eat, they drank...married wives...were given in marriage... Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded... Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.*” (Luke 17:26-30). This was the case right up to the day that Noah entered the Ark and Lot departed from the city. Scripture also states “*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only... Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*” (Matthew 24:36 and 44). The Rapture could occur at any time.

At the Rapture the professing church is sleeping and there is little general expectation of the Lord's return: "*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*" (Matthew 25:5) and "*Watch ye therefore...lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping*" (Mark 13:35-36).

### **~ The Second Coming as a distinct event**

At the Second Coming Christ returns to the earth to rule both Israel and the entire world from the throne of David in Jerusalem: "*And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east...*" (Zechariah 14:4) and "*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*" (Luke 1:32-33)

At the Second Coming the resurrection of the dead which is referred to in the Book of Revelation does not occur until after the Antichrist is defeated. The dead here referred to are those who came to Christ during the Tribulation and were martyred for their faith:

*"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."* (Revelation 20:4-6).

This passage of scripture is describing the two groups which form "*the first resurrection*," namely (i) the saints caught up in the Rapture (both living believers and dead church-age believers) and (ii) believers who were martyred for their faith during the Tribulation. (Some Bible scholars believe that the resurrection of the dead, which takes place just prior to the Rapture, will also include Old Testament believers.)

At the Second Coming all of the church-age saints will return to earth with Christ at His Second Coming:

*"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives...and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."* (Zechariah 14:4-5)



*“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” (Revelation 19:11-14)*

The armies referred to cannot be the angels alone since reference is made to the clothing of the saints (*“fine linen, white and clean”*). Therefore the Rapture must have taken place before the Second Coming and must constitute a completely separate event.

At the Second Coming the world is nearing the end of the greatest war in history, where countless millions have died through famine, war and disease and the entire earth has been subjected to appalling devastation: *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”* (Matthew 24). Every one of the Seals described in the Book of Revelation will have been opened before the Lord comes to defeat the Antichrist.

## **Pre-tribulation argument**

We will now consider the various pieces of evidence, from both the Old and the New Testaments, which are often cited in support of the Pre-Tribulation position:

### **Comfort**

1. *“For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”* (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10) To be delivered from the wrath to come means to avoid the trials of the Tribulation.

*“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night...For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Thessalonians 5:1 and 9). This is a promise that believers will not have to face the wrath of *“the day of the Lord”*.

*“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:18). The rapture can only be a comfort if it occurs before the Tribulation.

*“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord...”* (Luke 12:35-36). This enjoins believers to be ready for the return of Christ, which could occur at any time.

### **Escape from Wrath**

2. *“For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”* (Luke 21:35-36). The Tribulation is the ultimate expression of God’s wrath. To be accounted *“worthy to escape all these things”* one must be removed from among *“all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth”*. If this promise is to be properly fulfilled it must occur before the period of wrath commences.

### **The Holy Spirit as the Restrainer**

3. *“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains [will do so] until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.”* (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8) [NKJV] This states that the Holy Spirit, who has dwelt in the church since the day of Pentecost and who restrains the power of lawlessness and iniquity, will be *“taken out of the way.”* The departure of the restraining power of the Holy Spirit – which will occur with the rapture of the church – will be necessary if the Antichrist is to pursue his course unhindered.

### **The Church**

4. The church is not seen or mentioned in the Book of Revelation between the end of chapter 3 and the start of chapter 19. This would imply that the church is absent from the Tribulation described in chapters 4-18.

### **Signs**

5. The Second Coming of Christ (where he defeats the Antichrist) is preceded by very specific signs, as set out in Matthew 24 and elsewhere. However the rapture of the church-age saints can occur at any time, with no warning or sign of any kind. This implies that the Rapture takes place before the Second Coming and before the signs which inaugurate the Tribulation period.

### **The Old Testament**

6. The Old Testament did not make any prophetic statements about the church age. *“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump...”* (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). It is described as a “mystery” because it had not previously been revealed. If the church was still involved in the events of the Tribulation one would expect this important fact to feature somewhere in Old Testament prophecy, but it does not appear to do so.

Reference is made to *“the last trump”*. Silver trumpets and rams’ horns (*shofar*) were used on high holy days, the Feasts of the Lord. (*“Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.”* – Psalm 81:3-4). On such occasions they sounded many times, not just once. The *“last trump”* may imply the repeated sounding of the *shofar* or ram’s horn on the resurrection of the church. The repeated sounding of the ram’s horn trumpet at the fall of Jericho is a possible prefiguration of this event. One of the earlier trumpet calls may summon all who died in Christ (*“the dead in Christ shall rise first”*), while the *“last trump”* may summon all living believers.

### **The Gentiles**

7. *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”* (Romans 11:25) The *“blindness”* of Israel will persist until *“the fulness of the Gentiles”* (i.e. the age or full number of the gentiles) has come to completion. The prophetic clock, as it relates to Old Testament prophecies of the End Time, is on hold (like the sun in the sky in Joshua 10:13) and will not restart until the age of the Gentiles has reached its *“fulness”* with the Rapture. The Great Tribulation is concerned with Israel and her enemies (the church is not her enemy).

### **Endure to the End**

8. Born-again believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit. Their salvation is not determined by works of any kind. Therefore, when the Lord says *“But he who endures to the end shall be saved”* (Matthew 24:13) – a key verse in the Tribulation chapter – he is referring to those who turn to Christ during the Tribulation, not to those who were saved during the church age. This implies that the Holy Spirit has left the earth and is no longer ‘sealing’ the new believers. Seemingly to be saved during the Tribulation one must endure to the end. (The 144,000 are sealed by an angel *“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God”* – Revelation 7:2. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned.)

### **Israel as Witness to the World**

9. The witness for God during the Tribulation is Israel, not the church. It would be extraordinary if the church were on earth during the Tribulation and yet not receive any mention in chapters 4-18 of the Book of Revelation. The 144,000 are witnesses to the world from the 12 tribes of Israel (except Dan). They are not church-age believers.

### **Revenge**

10. *"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* (Revelation 6:10) This is the prayer of the saints in heaven, namely *"the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."* This means they are saints of Israel who came to the Lord during the Tribulation and are calling for revenge. Church-age saints would not make a prayer of this kind since they would be familiar with, and obedient to, the command of Jesus to love one's enemies.

### **The Twenty-four Elders**

11. The 24 elders in the Book of Revelation are of special significance. Before the events of the Tribulation commence, they are seated on 24 thrones (not just seats) and wear victors' crowns on their heads. The crown is given by the Lord as a reward to the righteous on the day of judgment: *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* – 2 Timothy 4:8. The expression *"at that day"* refers to the day of Christ, when He comes for his own. *"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."* – James 1:12.

The 24 elders are believed to be the representatives of both the Raptured church and all who were resurrected in Christ. If they are wearing crowns, then they must already have gone through the Rapture/Resurrection and been judged by the Lord. They cannot be angels since there is no suggestion anywhere in scripture that an angel may wear a crown or receive a reward. The representative nature of the 24 elders is prefigured by the appointment by David of 24 elders to represent the entire Levitical priesthood (*"...the four and twentieth to Maaziah. These were the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him."* – 1 Chronicles 24:18-19)

### **The Two Witnesses**

12. The two witnesses in Jerusalem are the two olive trees mentioned by Zechariah (*"Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left."* – Zechariah 4:3) and are referred to again in a similar manner in the Book of Revelation – *"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth."* – Revelation 11:4. They are clothed in sackcloth (which is found only in the Old Testament and never in the New) and call down flaming judgment upon the enemies of Israel (This too is appropriate for Old Testament believers but not for church-age believers). The two witnesses mark a resumption of Old Testament judgment, which is not associated with the church-age. This would strongly suggest that the church has left the earth by the time they arrive.

### **Noah and his Family**

13. The eight righteous people then living on earth were preserved in the Ark during the Flood. They too were 'lifted above' the judgment which befell the entire earth. The Ark was covered within and without with pitch. The Hebrew word for pitch, *kaphar*, occurs 102 times in the Old Testament and in virtually all other cases is translated 'atonement' [Strong's H3722]. It was through the atonement of Christ (which lay in the future) that the family of the righteous was preserved from God's wrath.

### **Lot and his Family**

14. The small number of righteous people living in the region of Sodom and Gomorrah (namely Lot and his family) were also removed from the scene by divine intervention immediately before Judgment was delivered.

### **Jacob's Trouble**

15. The Tribulation is the time of "Jacob's trouble," when the children of Israel finally find deliverance from bondage after a period of great trial. We know it as the period of the Tribulation, "*for that day is great, so that none is like it*":

*"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."* (Jeremiah 30:7-9)

This description marks the Tribulation as an event specific to Israel, not the church.

### **Prayer**

16. If the church were still on earth during the Tribulation, it would alert the world to the identity of the Antichrist and to the massive deception that he was orchestrating. The church would also pray fervently against the works of the Antichrist and hinder him greatly in his deadly programme of deception and destruction. Since the Book of Revelation tells us that the Antichrist enjoys virtually uninterrupted success in his work until the Second Coming of Christ, it is reasonable to conclude that the church is not on the earth during the Tribulation.

### **The 144,000**

17. “*For the Jews require a sign...*” (1 Corinthians 1:22). What sign therefore will the 144,000 receive? These men must go through an extraordinary spiritual transformation to convert from Judaism to Christ, all at virtually the same time, and become ardent missionaries and witnesses throughout the earth. It has been suggested that the Rapture of the church is such a sign. The sudden and inexplicable disappearance of millions of born-again Christians, as well as thousands of Jews who had converted to Christianity (known as Messianic Jews), will trigger this momentous event. This must occur at the commencement of the Tribulation period if the 144,000 are to have enough time to evangelize the world and lead many to Christ.

The details surrounding the rapture or translation of Elijah are of particular significance since they prefigure the wider context within which the End Time rapture occurs:

*And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. (2 Kings 2:8-15)*



Elisha asked Elijah for “*a double portion of thy spirit.*” Elijah said that this exceptional request would be granted **provided** Elisha actually saw him as he was “taken”. This points to the stunned recognition by the 144,000 of the spiritual significance of the Rapture, when millions of born-again Christians, as well as thousands of Messianic Jews, disappear from the earth. When they **see** the sign, they awaken to the truth of the Gospel and are saved, whereupon a great outpouring of the Spirit is given unto them. Just as Elisha picked up the mantle of Elijah and continued on from where his mentor had left off, so the saved remnant of Israel will pick up the mantle of the Church and continue the work of the LORD.

Two other passages in scripture confirm the special blessing that the saved remnant of Israel will receive during their great awakening in the End Time. Both appear in prophetic chapters relating to the Second Coming and its implications for Israel:

*“Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee” – Zechariah 9:12*

*“But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.” – Isaiah 61:6-7*

### **The Marriage of the Lamb**

18. The Book of Revelation clearly states that the marriage of Christ to His bride, the Church, takes place in heaven before Christ returns to earth at the Second Coming to defeat the Antichrist:

- [7] *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*
- [8] *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*
- [9] *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*
- [10] *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*
- [11] *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*
- [12] *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*
- [13] *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. (Revelation 19:7-13)*

This shows that the Rapture and the Second Coming are two separate events. It also implies that the Rapture must have taken place well before the Second Coming. We know this because the Bible draws a clear parallel between the Jewish tradition of engagement, betrothal and marriage and the preparations made by Christ in anticipation of His marriage to the church.

The 'engagement' of Christ to his bride took place before the foundation of the world – "*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*" (Ephesians 1:4) He claimed his bride legally through betrothal at his first coming and then went to prepare a place for her. A dowry is paid at the betrothal: "*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*" – 1 Corinthians 6:20.



He promised to come again and take her to the home which he had prepared for her. According to Jewish custom in Biblical times, the groom came unannounced at her home after an interval of a year or so and called forth his bride – the date was never specified in advance. He would arrive during the night to the sounding of trumpets. The parable of the Ten Virgins would appear to describe the five who were ready and thus prepared for the Rapture, while the other five, who were not ready but sleeping, would miss the Rapture. By the time they awoke the groom had come and gone. The five wise virgins were the true church, while the five foolish virgins (who were not filled with the Holy Spirit) were the professing but unsaved (non-born again) church.

At the formal betrothal ceremony, which had legal standing, the bride and groom would seal their betrothal by drinking wine from the same cup. They would not drink together again until they were married.

During the year or so of betrothal the bride would work on her wedding garment. Meanwhile the groom, who lived at his father's house, would construct what was traditionally known as the *little mansion*. This comprised one or more rooms built on to his father's house in which the married couple would live together thereafter:

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. (John 14:1-4)*

While the groom was working on the little mansion, his father kept track of progress. Only the father of the groom had the authority to determine when the little mansion was ready and that the time had finally come for his son to go forth and bring home his bride.

When the groom returned with his bride, the nuptials and marriage feast commenced. This traditionally lasted seven days and was a time of great joy and celebration. The third phase of the wedding process, after the betrothal and the nuptials, was consummation. This represents Christ and his bride living together in blessed oneness in eternity.

## **Post-Tribulation Argument**

Most of the arguments for a Post-Tribulation Rapture are based on an alternative interpretation of scriptural passages already cited in the previous sections. In particular advocates of a Post-Tribulation Rapture do not appear to accept the arguments set out in the section entitled *The Rapture and the Second Coming are Two Separate Events*. They also draw attention to certain passages of scripture, as follows.

1. According to this school of thought, the Second Coming is a single, definitive event. Christ cannot come to take His bride and then come again to deal with the Antichrist. If the saints who return with Him to earth are exclusively those (living and dead) who have been taken up in the Rapture, then one must account for the differences between the following passages of scripture:

*“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matthew 24:29-31)*

*“But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.” (Mark 13:24-27)*

The second description includes the words, “*the uttermost part of the earth*”, while the first does not.

2. Scripture refers specifically to the last trumpet call, at which point the Rapture will occur:

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” (1 Corinthians 15:52)*

The last trumpet call implies earlier trumpet calls and could be taken as a reference to the seven Trumpet judgments in the Book of Revelation. If so, then the Rapture takes place at an advanced stage of the Great Tribulation.

3. The reference to “the first resurrection” is made in Revelation 20, after the Second Coming. There is no reason to believe it provides for a Rapture-type event before the Tribulation:

*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*  
(Revelation 20:4-5)

### **The Mid-Tribulation Argument**

The Mid-Tribulation position is sometimes called the Pre-Wrath Rapture since it sees the church going through the first half of the Tribulation but avoiding the second half, known as the Great Tribulation, when the full force of the Antichrist is unleashed.

Much of their argument appears to be based on the belief that the “birth pangs” to which Jesus referred, and which the church will experience, run into the first half of the 7-year Tribulation period. To that extent they believe the church *does* escape the Tribulation via the Rapture, but they interpret the Tribulation in the real sense as a period shorter than seven years. Referring to the Antichrist, Daniel 7:25 says:

*“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”*

The term “*a time and times and the dividing of time*” is almost universally accepted among Bible scholars to mean three and a half years (a year plus two years plus half a year). If the “saints” to whom Daniel is referring mean the church, then, it is argued, the Rapture takes place half way through the seven year period of the Tribulation.

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**For more information about the End Time, Israel, and the ongoing  
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